COMICS BUYER'S GUIDE

#1347
September 10, 1999
ISSN 0745-4570
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· SPECIAL REPORT ·
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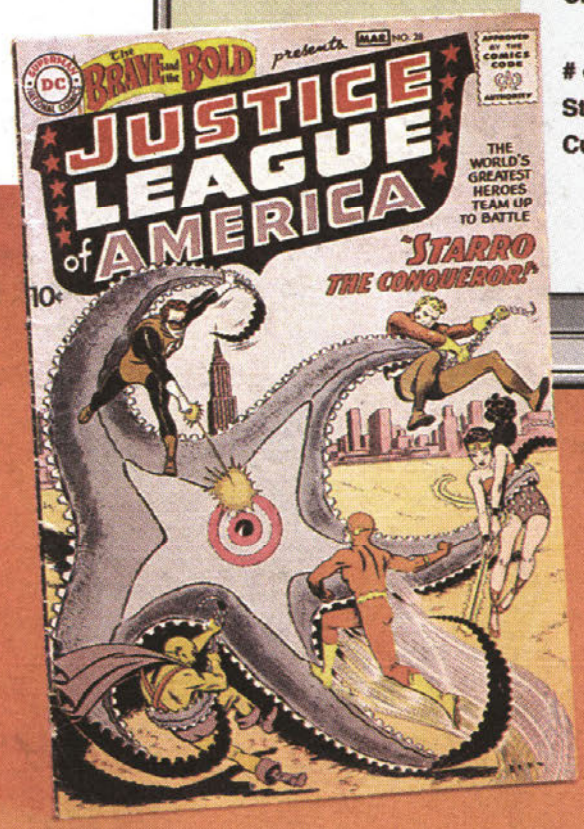
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(Vol. 29, #37)

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Subscription service:
circulation@krause.com
News items:
cbgnews@krause.com

ON THE WEB
www.comicsbuyersguide.com

Comics Buyer's Guide (ISSN 0745-4570) is published weekly for $38.95 per year by Krause Publications, Inc., 700 E. State St., Iola, WI 54990; Clifford Mishler, president, Iola, WI 54945. Periodical class postage paid at Iola, WI 54945, and additional mailing offices. **Printed in the USA.**

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Deciphering the Comics Code

Editorial by ***Maggie Thompson***

My earliest comics-reading years consisted of constant exposure to comics that did not carry the seal of the Comics Magazine Association of America. I had learned to read with the help of my mother and comics mostly chosen from among the many titles circulated with the Dell imprint in 1947 and 1948. In fact, my family got into comics collecting because of the outstanding work Walt Kelly did for that line — with no Code seal anywhere on them.

Later, Dell would adopt the "Dell comics are good comics" slogan which Mark Evanier discusses on Page 26. But when *I* first read those issues, I came to that conclusion by myself. I was reading about talking ducks, brownies, Mother Goose, anthropomorphic swampland critters, a great gang of kids, stuffed dolls, and a little girl who handled life competently despite the worst efforts of a gang of boys.

As time went by, I added cowboy stories and jungle stories — and comics from other companies — to my four-color library. Some of my favorites were the zany adventures of a certain stretchy crime-fighter and another hero some called a Big Red Cheese.

I *did* see other types of comics from time to time. They just didn't strike me as worth keeping — or worth regular buying in a market in which they had to compete for my dime with the cool stuff I've already cited. Now and then, I'd pick up *Boy Comics* or *Daredevil* or the wonderful anthology comics with, say, Batman and Robin sharing pages with Pow Wow Smith.

But if there was nasty, child-warping stuff, I didn't see it. Or maybe I was (gasp) simply warped without knowing it. I read one story, after all, featuring an invisible sword-wielding skeleton. Mr. Mind did *horrible* things to the world for months before he was revealed to be a worm and paid the penalty for his crimes. Donald Duck met a zombie. Our Gang ran afoul of nasty types from time to time. But I don't think reading any of these tales made me violent or yearn for a criminal career.

Nor did the radio shows I listened to every day. Nor did the double-feature matinees I attended every Saturday from about the age of 10 ("lookin' up at Hoppy, Gene, and Roy — Oh, boy!").

Just before I turned 12, the Comics Code seal began to decorate the covers of comics on the newsstand I patronized — but I didn't pay much attention. Walt Kelly, for one, had already largely focused his attention on the *Pogo* comic strip, and Oskar Lebeck's name no longer appeared on Dell's comics. I did become intrigued by horror comics (and still recall a ghastly issue of *Black Cat Mystic* [which used to be *Black Cat*, a title with a costumed heroine I'd enjoyed] which carried a nauseating bunch of nasty tales). But my solution was to stop buying *Black Cat Mystic*.

And I discovered that, as I had grown, so had a line of comics evolved to feed my adolescent search for solid storytelling with a punch: the E.C. line of titles. Though stories with horrific endings were pretty routine in that line, evil was punished appropriately, the stories were imaginative, and the art was out of this world. Pretty good for a dime. And (despite exposure to movies, radio, and E.C. comics) I still felt *no* urge to rob a bank, chop up my siblings with an ax, or poison little old ladies of my acquaintance.

Soon, comics were forcibly returned to the nursery, and I got out of the comics-reading habit for five years. And you?

This week in Comics Buyer's Guide

On the cover

October-dated comics mark 45 years in which the Comics Code seal has appeared on the covers of thousands of comics that meet the requirements of the Code administrators of The Comics Magazine Association of America Inc.. As community standards have changed, the Code has been revised to reflect those changes. Are those revisions enough? This week, Patrick Daniel O'Neill visits with Code administrators, our columnists weigh in with their opinions of and experiences with the Code, and Jim Steranko shares his observations on how the Code has affected him over the years. You can also compare the 1954 Code with today's version (Pages 28 and 29) — and see the effects it had on stories reprinted shortly after its introduction in the 1950s (Pages 26 and 30).

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Have you voted for your favorite comics and creators of the century yet? Hurry! The deadline is September 17!

Get reviewed!

Items for *Comics Guide* should be sent to Editor Maggie Thompson.

Items for *Faraway Looks* should be sent to Managing Editor John Jackson Miller.

For the *Anime/Manga Shelf*, send items to Associate Editor Joyce Greenholdt.

To participate in *Comics in Your Future*, contact Projects Editor Brent Frankenhoff for an invitation.

Trade paperbacks for the *Comics Bookshelf* can be sent to Mike Keeney, Comic Corner, 2806-A S. Memorial Pkwy., Huntsville, AL 35801.

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Eisner brings his Spirit to DC

By Matt Brady and Michael Doran

At Comic-Con International: San Diego, DC and Will Eisner jointly announced an agreement which will allow DC to reprint Eisner's classic *Spirit* stories as well as Eisner's other work in both its hardcover Archives editions and other formats.

Eisner

"I've heard good things about DC," Eisner quipped, as he signed the agreement in front of a Pro/Con audience. *The Spirit Archives* are slated to begin release early next year and will be reprinted in color; however, the palette will appear more flat and classic than the deeper colors used in modern comics.

In addition to the Archives, the agreement also allows DC to pick up reprinting single issues of *The Spirit* where Kitchen Sink's reprints left off — as well as keep the 12-volume *Will Eisner Library* in print. In addition, Eisner reported that he is finishing his latest work, a 64-page story titled *The Last Day in Vietnam*, which will be released as part of the new DC publishing agreement.

DC representatives who wished to remain unnamed also suggested that DC may be interested in securing the rights for *The Spirit: The New Adventures*, the Spirit anthology series that featured Spirit stories by modern creators.

The Spirit: The New Adventures was published by Kitchen Sink before it closed its doors.

According to the source, DC is looking into the feasibility of a trade paperback collecting the issues of *The Spirit: The New Adventures* that would be released before a relaunch of a new volume of the series.

Lady Death gets animated

By Rob Allstetter

Chaos is teaming with ADV Films to produce an animated movie based on Chaos' Lady Death.

ADV Films Vice President Sharon Papa said, "We're beginning pre-production right now. It will be an original story concept provided by Chaos. It's not a theatrical production, but we may have it go to TV first (before home video)." Chaos President and Publisher Brian Pulido said he will write the film.

The film is being targeted for a 2001 release.

"It will be a worldwide release," Papa said. "We're going into Japan, Latin America, and Europe."

San Diego attendees win prizes from CGC

As part of its introduction to attendees of Comic-Con International: San Diego, Comics Guaranty Corporation (CGC) held a drawing at its booth. In cooperation with ***CBG***, the company gave away three prizes. The winners, drawn after the show, were:

1st Prize: The Edgar Church Mile High copy of *4Most Comics*, Vol. 2, #4 — **Alex Hertz, San Francisco, Calif.**

2nd Prize: A $170 grading certificate from CGC — **Joseph Troncozo, San Diego, Calif.**

3rd Prize: An $85 grading certificate from CGC — **Rich Koslowski, Menomonee Falls, Wis.**

Winners will receive their prizes when CGC opens for business in September. The Mile High copy of *4Most Comics* will be certified and graded prior to delivery. The certification includes a restoration check, impartial third-party grading opinion, and a new protective CGC holder.

***CBG** Editor Maggie Thompson and CGC's Steve Borock showed the grand prize at the CGC booth.*

Many major comic-book retailers and Golden and Silver Age dealers have signed up for CGC Charter membership. The company has reported that so many dealers have signed up that Charter membership is filled, but the company will continue to accept applications for Authorized members. Additionally, many collectors and part-time dealers have applied for Associate CGC membership, which is also available for interested applicants.

CGC may be contacted by writing to P.O. Box 1938, Parsippany, NJ 07054-0237, or by calling toll-free (877) NM-COMIC (662-6642).

Ostrander's *The Kents* goes to trade paperback in December

By Gary St. Lawrence

Ostrander

Fans of *The Kents* have wanted the entire series compiled in one volume, and this December DC will deliver with a trade paperback release of John Ostrander's 12-issue maxi-series. The 264-page book, scheduled to ship Dec. 17, not only collects the series, but also includes the correction of "historical glitches" that got past Ostrander in the series first printing. The book will also include a narrative introduction written by Ostrander exclusively for the volume. A cover price for the collection had not been announced by press time.

"There were some factual mistakes that made it into the first release of the stories that I've since learned the correct information about. So there will be some setting and placement changes," Ostrander said. "But, otherwise, it's a complete recompilation of the original material."

Ostrander added that fan support of the trade paperback will definitely be an influence in the decision to release another chapter chronicling the next generation of the Kents in Kansas.

"DC's been very supportive of the whole project, and we've had many people request both this trade paperback and the next chapter in the Kent family history," Ostrander said. "If sales are good on the trade paperback, it will give me ammunition to go to DC and propose another series. I definitely have ideas about where to pick up the story and move from there. But the point is moot, unless the fans support it.

"I would like to bring the Kent family history all the way to Jonathan and Martha," he said. "There are also Kent brothers, sisters, and cousins who would have their stories to tell. Like any family, there are bad sorts, and the Kents are no exception. I don't think any family is completely pure.

"So there is a lot more history in the Kent lineage to reveal. But I'm more interested in telling a historical story that has strong ties to the DC universe, but I don't want to get too tied up into it."

Additional adventures in December. Ostrander called December his "illustrated Western round-up month," because his new series on the Western history of the Marvel universe, *Blaze of Glory*, also begins in December with weekly installments.

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New activities, new companies star in San Diego

Postshow Roundup
Comics Buyer's Guide

By Gary St. Lawrence

A healthy mix of pros, both veteran and newcomer, and what organizers said they felt was increased fan attendance (although final attendance figures were unavailable at press time) made for a busy show at the 30th annual Comic-Con International: San Diego. However, compared to some other years, there was a noticeable lack of major announcements, ground-shaking events, or heavy-draw attractions.

An increased web presence. This year's show had a vastly increased number of computer-based demonstrations. A number of companies previewed, premiered, or promoted their websites at the show, including NextPlanetOver, Mile High Comics, and Stan Lee Media. "This is truly the beginning of a new era for entertainment hobbyists," said NextPlanetOver CEO and Co-Founder Dave Scott. "For years, people have had to travel miles to meet other like-minded people and revel in the passion and energy that exists in comic-book shops, specialty retail stores, studio stores, and at conventions. At NextPlanetOver, that excitement is now a single click away."

New publisher hunts for freelancers. Crossgeneration Comics provided more details of its plans to begin publishing in May 2000. The company provided a brochure showing the plans for its Oldsmar, Fla.-based studio with an office arrangement in which the entire creative team of its lines of comics will work together in one area. Brandon Peterson and other company staffers looked at dozens of portfolios at the show and indicated enthusiasm over the quality of much of the work they had been shown.

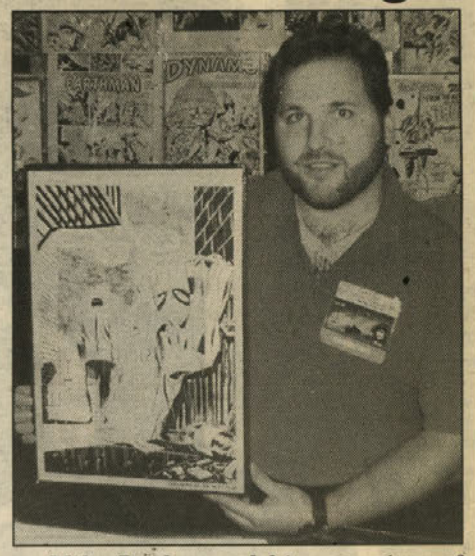
*The winner of $250 in **CBG** bucks and a prize from the convention at the Masquerade for his Iron Man costume was Allan Lavigne.*

Dealing on the floor. If there was a common theme to the sales and transactions at the dealer booths this year, it was the unusual, the offbeat, the unpredictable sale. Marty Hay, of Marty Hay Comics in Springerville, Ariz., said his sales were somewhat higher this year than in others, although a good half to two-thirds of those sales were to other dealers.

"The first day of the show was great," Hay said, "and the last three have been OK, maybe a bit better than OK. But the best sale for us this year was of a 1940 Donald Duck cartoon poster for $3,500. What was unusual about it was the rarity of the poster. It wasn't one of the movie posters; it was from one of the 'ordinary' cartoons. Those are a lot harder to come by than the movie posters. I found it a little odd that someone came looking specifically for it, especially since I've possessed it for the past decade."

Odd though the sale may have been, Hay, who specializes in Golden and Silver Age specialties, said he was happy with the "ample profit" he saw from the sale.

Perhaps the grandest sale of the show was made by Mike Burkey of Romitaman Original Art in Cleveland, Ohio. After several rounds of e-mail and online auction bidding through eBay, Burkey landed the prize of the original art for page eight of *Spider-Man* #50 — the now-famous scene of a rain-soaked and dejected Peter Parker, skulking away from the trash can into which he's just thrown his friendly neighborhood fighting togs.



Mike Burkey and his new piece of original art.

"I'd been bidding on Spider-Man stuff for a while, and this guy I'd been dealing with had a friend who had this original page from *Spider-Man* #50 and he wanted to sell it," said Burkey, who already owned pages 9-11 of that issue. "We talked back and forth for awhile in e-mail, but we finally closed the deal here at the show. I thought that was kind of

(Continues on Page 10)

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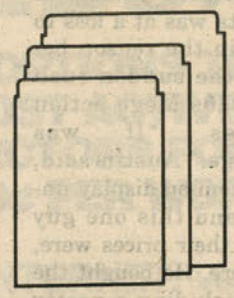

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SAN DIEGO
(From Page 8)

weird, but I had to have this page. It's the only interior splash page that John Romita ever did."

Austin

Jeff Austin of Dark Adventures Comics in Atlanta was at a loss to explain the reason behind the sudden rush on 1970s Mego action figures. "It was strange." Austin said, "We had a couple of them on display under the front rack, and this one guy came up, asked what their prices were, and if we had any more. He bought the every one of them, including a pretty rare Buckwheat figure. I wouldn't have thought there'd be a rush on these things, especially the non-super-hero figures. But I guess you never know." Austin also said he thought it strange that someone asked specifically for Marvel No-Prizes, which Austin just happened to have, blank. They sold for $40.

John Liu, co-owner of the Comics Cellar in Los Angeles, marveled at his good fortune in obtaining five overstuffed long boxes full of Japanese manga comics — "and not second-rate books," he added — for $5 per comic book.

"That's really, really cheap, because these comics have an average value of $15 each," said Liu, who also sold a copy of *Amazing Spider-Man* #9 to a colleague. "I bought them from another dealer here on the floor, and I was amazed at the price. We also picked up 10 really overstuffed long boxes of top-of-the-line graphic novels for $5 each, too, and it was all new stuff."

Dodds

Nelson Dodds of Hinckley, Ohio, said there had been a serious lapse in sales on Golden Age material, much to the dismay of the Golden Age specialty seller. "Golden Age comics simply aren't selling well. They just don't move any more," he said. "What sells are the mid-range comics, things that go for under $200. I've had a lot of activity in that range.

"Sure, there are a lot of inquiries. People are always coming up and asking how much this is, or that, and people do want these comics, but they're just not buying. It's a trend that's been growing for the last several years. You can take $1,000 and invest it in the stock market, and a couple of years later, you might have $2,500. But take $1,000 and buy a Golden Age *Batman* comic book and, after a couple of years, you're lucky if you haven't lost money on the deal."

Dodds' booth sported a "Golden Age 25% Discount" box, which he said probably got the most action of anything in his display. "It's my best, consistent source of sales," he said, "and not just here at the convention. But I think the one truly unusual sale I've seen here has been on my Fiction House comics. I have a huge collection of Fiction House material, almost all the titles, and I've been selling them very well, which I just find unusual."

In all, dealer consensus was that sales in San Diego this year were a little better than average, perhaps due to the increased attendance. Mainstream comics moved slowly but steadily, and true "collector merchandise" was in high demand. As one dealer noted, "It really works in our favor if the convention has poor events or, at least, not enough good ones, because that translates into a lot more people wandering the floor looking for something to do. When that happens, people are much more inclined to buy. Sure, it's impulse buying, but it's still buying. And, let's face it, that's why I'm here every year."

On Aug. 10, a reception was held during the San Diego Expo at which former NBA star Magic Johnson announced formation of a joint venture involving Blackboard Entertainment and his Magic Media to teach reading to children. "What better way to be involved with children," he asked, "than comic books?" Johnson said he would be approving the content directly. Left to right are ***CBG*** *Managing Editor John Jackson Miller, Johnson,* ***CBG*** *Editor Maggie Thompson, and Blackboard's Michael Davis.*

Blood drive bags pints. The Robert A. Heinlein Memorial Blood Drive collected 176 pints during the show from attendees who were willing to give up an hour of their time and a pint of blood.

See you next year. Next year's event is scheduled for July 20-23. Information is available from Comic-Con International: San Diego, P.O. Box 128458, San Diego, CA 92112.

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Peter David

David puts Captain Marvel through his paces. Peter David and Marvel's **Tom Brevoort** are treading carefully when talking about their new ongoing *Captain Marvel* series, pencilled by **CrissCross**. Launching in November, the monthly title ties directly into the upcoming conclusion of the **Kurt Busiek** and **Carlos Pacheco** *Avengers Forever* maxi-series. So, while they're sparse on details, what writer and editor *will* say is that the series stars Genis (son of Mar-Vell, the original Captain Marvel) and a character David has more than a passing familiarity with: Rick Jones.

"My working explanation of the series was that it's an anti-buddy title," said Brevoort. "It's about these two guys who have something in common — their relationship with Mar-Vell — and who, through circumstance, are stuck hanging around with each other, but who absolutely cannot stand each other. It's a character-oriented series, though one that'll go to some neat places and explore novel concepts. And I'm sure it'll be leavened with plenty of humor, as that's always been a hallmark of Peter's writing style."

For David, the series is about expectations — and the two main characters' efforts to live up to them. "Genis' father was something of a legend, and Genis is faced with having to live up to that 'legacy,' if you will," he explained. "People are both expecting him to succeed — and, at the same time, expecting him to fail. One of those people is Rick Jones, who nevertheless finds himself in the odd position of serving as something of a mentor. It's an unusual role for Rick; after all, he has a long history of being the sidekick. He's not the one who drives the boat. This time out, however, Captain Marvel is looking to Rick, to some degree, for advice and guidance.

"They're on Earth, and Captain Marvel is endeavoring to be a super-hero; both of those are far more in Rick's bailiwick than Cap's. But Rick resents the notion that this guy is calling himself Captain Marvel, even though Genis is entitled to the title and isn't particularly ecstatic that he's been put into this position. So, although Rick wouldn't deliberately steer him wrong, sometimes he'll give less-than-sterling advice just to tweak Genis and amuse himself — such as when he suggests that Genis uses an 'ancient battle cry' to strike terror into his enemies: 'Owah-Tagoo-Siam.'"

David said he's looking forward to another go-around with a pair of characters with whom his relationship had ended abruptly. "The opportunity to work with Rick and Marlo again, and deal with some of the aspects I wasn't ecstatic with that occurred after I left *Hulk*, was a major draw for me," David said. "Naturally, my long-term plans for Rick have to be reconfigured to accommodate the presence of Genis in his life, but that's part of the challenge."

And as to the question that immediately comes to the mind of many Peter David fans, "As for The Hulk, he'll be showing up in #2," David said. "So, if retailers whack down their orders for #2 as they habitually do, that might prove to be a bit of a boo boo."

More changes in store for Bat-titles. Along with all the previously announced changes to the Batman family of titles beginning in January — creative teams, directions, costumes, hardware, *etc.* — DC has confirmed that two core Bat-titles will introduce slightly tweaked formats.

Detective Comics, by the team of **Greg Rucka** and **Shawn Martinbrough**, increases to 40 pages in January to allow Rucka to craft longer, more complex crime stories, and *Batman: Gotham Knights*, by **Devin Grayson**, **Dale Eaglesham**, and **John Floyd**, will be backed up each month with special *Batman: Black & White* features from such high-profile creators as **Jim Lee**.

A back-burner project for Alan Moore and Jim Lee. While both DC and **Jim Lee** have been reporting that a Lee-Alan Moore project which will introduce a new character into Moore's America's Best Comics' line is in the works, according to Moore, any collaboration is more than a year away at the earliest.

"I got sent some samples of Jim's new work and was at the same time asked what I thought of it and whether or not I'd like to work with him," Moore said. "I said that it looked great and that I'd love to do something with Jim, maybe a graphic novel or something, but with writing five titles a month for ABC, there's no real likelihood of that in the near future — next year, maybe. Right now, I don't have a single idea for it yet, other than I like Jim's artwork and can see that we could do some nice science-fiction story together, but I've really got no idea beyond that.

"So the short answer is: Yes, I will be doing something with Jim, but for me at the moment, in the thick of all these other titles, it's in the remote future, and I've got no idea what it is, when it is, or anything else about it, really. Hopefully, we'll be able to put something together."

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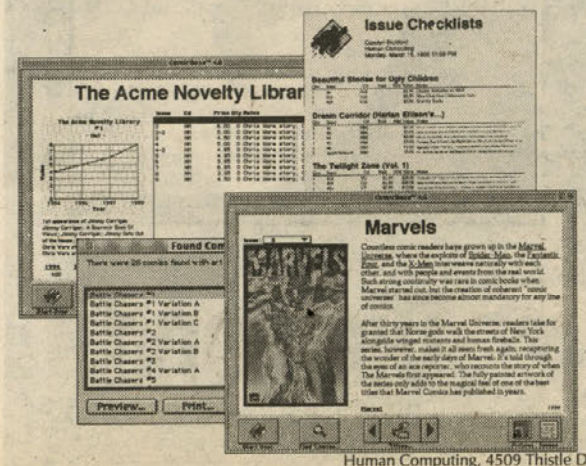

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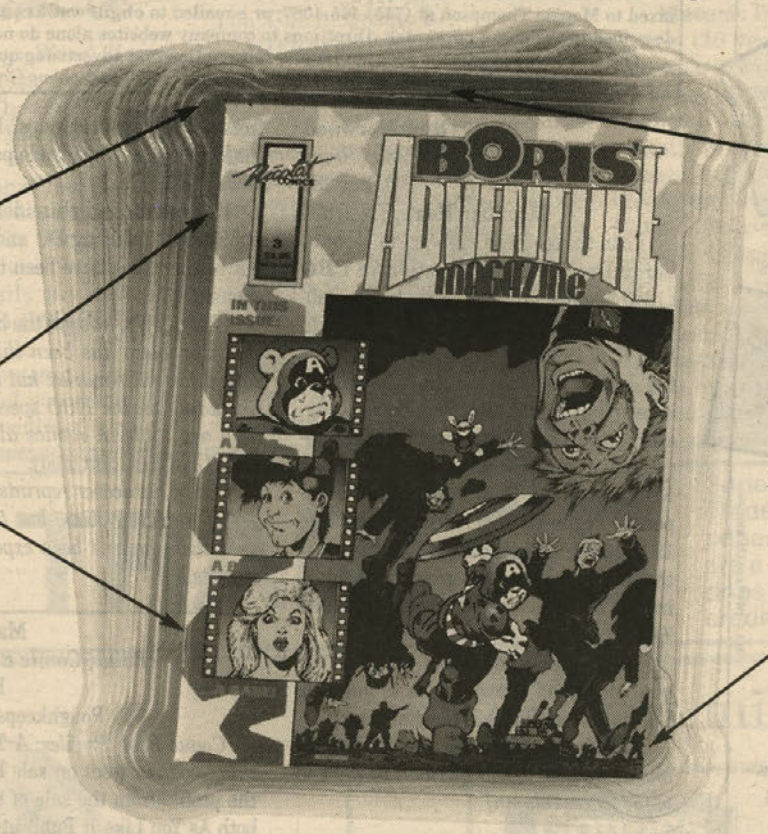

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Rick Norwood
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I can think of two answers to Howard Leroy Davis's trivia question in ***CBG*** #1345 about a group of adventurers published continuously from before World War II to the late '60s. I first thought of the Junior Woodchucks, but they didn't appear until 1951. But the Texas Rangers, in the *Lone Ranger* comic book, appeared from 1939 until 1977. And the Knights of the Round Table have appeared regularly in *Prince Valiant* from 1937 to the present day. Of course, neither of these can be the group he is thinking of, since neither ended in "the late '60s."

Here is another trivia question for you. Desmond Llewellen is to John de Lancie as Tom Baker is to what actor?

*[**JJM:** That's simple. You'll find my answer to your trivia question at the end of the letters column]*

Joel Pollack
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Forgive me if this question has been asked before.

Why is there no regularly published full-color $1.99 *Little Lulu* comic book?

We comics folk are always saying we need to attract more children and more female readers. Isn't *Little Lulu* the perfect vehicle for both groups? I would even settle for a nice $9.95 trade paperback (on newsprint).

I've mentioned this idea to several publishers (including DC and Gemstone), but blank stares have been their only response.

C'mon folks, let's get the ball rolling.

[A problem has been that Lulu, designed for mass-market kid consumption (including on the HBO specials) has not been available in comics aimed at kids since Gold Key went away.

Lovely hardcover reprints fed the hunger of nostalgic fans, but the kids who need them haven't been exposed to these classics.]

Matt Poslusny
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Comic Book Profiles: A Tribute to Archie Goodwin went on sale last week. All the profits from the sale of this issue (for both As You Like It Publications and Diamond Comic Distributors) will be donated to the Archie Goodwin Memorial Scholarship fund that has been set up at the School of Visual Arts. Now that the issue is completed, I just wanted to take a minute and publicly thank some people who helped make it possible.

First, Diamond Comics and especially our rep, Frank Supiot, were a tremendous support. Their help on this project went above and beyond what I was hoping for. Morgan Printing, especially Toni Thordarson, were also a great help in putting this issue together. People out there who are self-publishing and have not checked out Morgan to print their comics should give it a look. There is usually an ad for Morgan in the *Showcase* ad section.

I also wanted to thank John Jackson Miller of both ***Comics Buyer's Guide*** and *Comics Retailer* for helping promote the issue. We were quite happy with the coverage that he gave it in both publications!

Last, those who would like to contribute *directly* to the scholarship fund may do so by sending a donation to: Archie Goodwin Memorial Award Scholarship Fund, SVA Foundation, School of Visual Arts, 209 E. 23rd St., New York, NY 10010.

Tim Eldred

It hadn't occurred to me how much I'd lost touch with the comic-book community until recently, when a friend tipped me off to a "where they are now" letter in this column a few issues back, so I thought it prudent to mention that I'm alive and well, as is my desire to continue the *Grease Monkey* comics series that began with Styx International, then migrated to Kitchen Sink, and finally to Jim Valentino's gone but not forgotten Image Non-Line. I've had to divert time away from *Grease Monkey* into a prosperous but demanding TV animation career, a full-color

(Continues on Page 16)

For Art's Sake — By Chris Smigliano

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Oh, So? From Page 14

graphic novel called *The Man Who Grew Young* by author Daniel Quinn, and navigating the treacherous waters of singles life in oh-so-friendly L.A.

Grease Monkey is still a going concern, though. I've scripted more than a dozen issues and have outlines for many more, but I've also been keeping my eye on the comics biz and have yet to see a promising window open for renewed publication. Call me ambitious, but I aspire to pretty much the same readership as the esteemed Paul Chadwick, and when I see a worthy project like *The World Below* struggle to rise above the waterline, I am reluctant to subject *Grease Monkey* to the same conditions. It's my fondest wish that the series will one day become something of an institution, but the marketplace will have to get a little friendlier, or I'll have to put away enough of that TV money to self-publish. As of now, I'm hedging my bets on the second option.

I'd always had this secret wish that we'd reach the point where nobody could make any money publishing comic books so that the only people left in the business would be in it for love. This would then become the core of a classic creative renaissance. I don't know yet if we're headed in that direction, but I will be a grateful participant either way.

Chris Juricich
1808 Chestnut St.
Berkeley, CA 94702

I'm on a mailing list for a fellow in a town nearby who buys and sells collections. Every six weeks or so he has a Saturday sale at his home in his front driveway, the highlight for me being his 25¢ and 50¢ long boxes. In these I can get my fill of nearly any comic book that came out from about 1980 to about 1995: Marvel, Image, DC — lots of independents. All at a quarter a pop. Go into any comics shop from San Francisco to San Jose and find these self-same books coated in plastic and priced at guide or higher.

It's a great opportunity to pick up on runs of *Fantastic Four* in the 300s, the majority of the Peter David *Hulk* issues, and many of the Image runs I never bothered with when they first came out that, some years later, have gathered a modicum of respectability for being competent entertainment (*Savage Dragon, Grifter, etc.*), albeit at a tenth of their original cover price. Don't even get me started on the availability of the Valiant titles — which all made great reading, though I bought them directly off the stands then.

Bear in mind the frequent sales I'm privy to around the San Francisco Bay Area by virtue of putting myself on mailing lists for various retailers and regularly attending local comics shows (Wonder Con and Super Con), where comics that shipped within the last six months are often available discounted to 25¢ to 60¢ each, and one begins to wonder: why bother buying retail each week?

This is a serious situation, I'm thinking, for retailers. When a regular guy like me, who likes a deal and to save money as much as the next fellow, starts to consistently see recently shipping comics in bargain bins only months after they've been racked in local comics shops, how does one ascribe regular purchasing as a canny economic move?

Superman's Nemesis, Lex Luthor, The World Below by Paul Chadwick, *Martian Manhunter*, *Love in Tights* from SLG, *Subhuman* from Dark Horse, *Stray Bullets*, Vertigo's *Lucifer, Nightwing, Predator: Homeworld, Hitman, Grendel: Black, White & Red*. The list goes on, 50¢ apiece. Or should I have bought them at $2.50 apiece within the past three months?

What are comics worth? I see loads of comics for sale at way low prices and then see them in the stores for bagged cover price plus a quarter. Yeah, I know the hubbub and arguments that our retailers have overhead and are just trying to get profit to survive. Yes, it's understandable. But there are comics shops loaded with 3/$1 comics that are still gathering dust across town in the back-issue bins. Where does the smart guy buy, then?

Retailers have argued back and forth, saying things like, "If a retailer puts comics that aren't moving in bargain bins, he's creating a perception that comics have no value and he's cutting his own throat. I've heard on the other side that retailers who put comics in plastic and boards are artificially creating higher perception of value.

The buyer better shop around or get fleeced. It's no different with other consumables, I suppose, but, as I've perceived, comics purchasing is a different animal than buying a new stereo or car. Buying these items, relatively high-ticket as they are, one wouldn't think twice about shopping around at different locations, checking ads in the newspapers, or even looking online for a good price or deal. It's natural. You look around, find the best price or best deal, and you buy. Nothing shaky or underhanded about doing it.

But new comics? They come out weekly and they're bought. Yet this is not an item that has a price-competitive point, really. It costs what it costs and you buy it. Even should a comics consumer intellectually realize that this copy of *Hourman* #3 or *Mage the Hero Defined* #11 could languish in a bargain bin in six months, why doesn't he wait? The answer won't surprise you, of course, and it's perhaps the key element besides business acumen that allows comics shops to survive. The comics shop is selling to not just avid readers, but collectors. The avid fan wants his story *now*. He wants to see what's happened to his hero *now*.

And the collector? This imperative is so strong in the comics consumer that, even if he's able to get past instant gratification, he can't bear to chance missing an issue! "Well, I've got *Hourman* #1-4 — no, I can't stop!" Whew. This, in no small part, is why comics shops continue to be so successful. It's that addictive personality trait that collectors share that keeps them coming into the store every week.

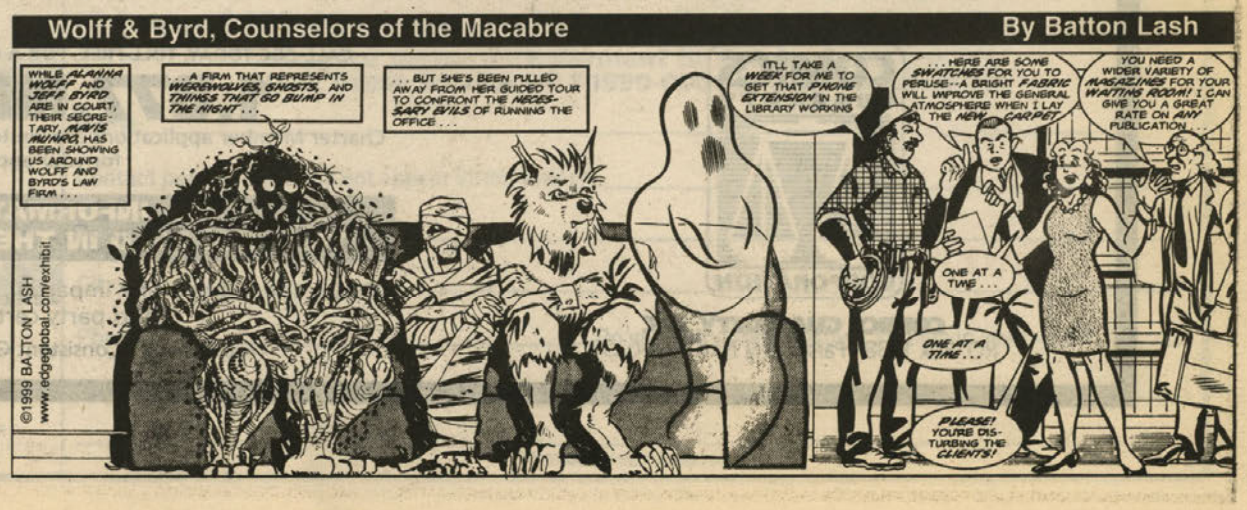
For a variety of reasons, not the least of which is my own dismay at price increases, I've managed to shed some of the more pervasive aspects of collecting and am in a greater measure of self-control.

I constantly have about two dozen or more incomplete story arcs or mini-series awaiting completion. *Legion of Super-Heroes* stories, *Ranma 1/2, Books of Magic, Chase*, and various Dark Horse or Vertigo minis lie incomplete on my shelf. But I'll find them, eventually, and I'll find them at prices well under a buck apiece on average, because I have conquered the controlling aspects of my collector-brain, and I'm saving money in the process.

What's the true value of a comic book

(Continues on Page 18)

Wolff & Byrd, Counselors of the Macabre — By Batton Lash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Oh, So?

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that sells for $2.50 in July but can be had for 25¢-50¢ only six months later?

*[What you're doing, in taking time to hunt here and there and fill collection holes for the least money, **etc.**, is acting as your own retailer. You're including in the cost of each issue the time it takes (including extra transportation to a variety of sites, maintaining a current "wants" list, and keeping the shelf sorted) and such costs as convention admission charges).*

This can be a lot of fun. Some folks do the same sort of thing in other fields — from buying clothes at garage sales to ongoing monitoring of online sites for Atari 2600 games. And there are retailers who do much the same sort of thing, limiting their orders to copies ordered in advance for their subscription services to avoid having to deal with losing money on bargain bin material.]

Richard M. Brown
2326 Cabot
Detroit, MI 48209

Name a super-hero who can split into two, walk through walls, change his features like a shape-shifter, reverse time, and throw his voice long distances.

Surprise! The answer is Superman!

According to the old TV show, Superman could walk through walls and will himself into two. The movie Superman could change the past. The Earth-2 Superman could change his face. The comic-book Superman threw his voice.

[Ah, continuity ...]

Wayne Gardner
41 West Louisiana State Dr.
Kenner, LA 70065

Let's just do away with the grading system as it is practiced. It tries to quantify books by their flaws (or lack thereof) but then one gets bogged down in trying to figure out how much a nick or teeny tear alters the price: a nightmare of a system.

Instead, I propose a new system, one that more accurately reflects the pricing practices of retailers, who are the ones who set the prices in the first place. It's a simpler system, with simpler terms with simpler definitions. See if you really like it ... or perhaps not.

M Mint: You practically need to own one to buy the book with this grade. Examples: all Golden/Silver Age Marvel and DC, anything tied in with current reprint or reinterpretation, all in perfect or near-perfect condition.

NM Near-Mint: You nearly have to own the mint to buy the issue. Examples: same as mint, but these have actually been read.

VF Very Fine: Thanks to a massively funded PR campaign, the comics press thinks the artist or writer of the issue is ... Examples: just look at what the current splashy ads are hyping in all the various comics media.

F Fine: Due to tastes of people doing reviews, the comics press thinks the writer or artist of the issue is ... Examples: the VF books next week.

G Good: These are comics whose creators or owners can't afford PR campaigns and, thus, are routinely ignored by the comics press but still sell consistently well every month because they are ... to read. Examples: the small press, the independents, furries, manga, need I say more?

P Poor: Trying to sell these comics at anything other than heavily discounted prices will make you ... Examples: the VF books next month.

You have to admit: It's precise and it accurately reflects the true comics market. So what do you think?

And Kevin Hennessey only told half the story. Sure, Superboy existed in a pocket universe, and also, sure, that meant that — since he was intimately part of the Crisis — the Crisis was also in this pocket universe.

But, as I've been pointing out to people around here, the Crisis covered all of DC history, all the then-official history. That means that all DC History — the multiverses, the anti-matter universe, the dimension of magic, all of that — was actually all in that pocket universe! With just that one idea, DC was able to shunt all the creative effort of decades of writers into the category of "imaginary story."

That's how it was able to get away with changing so much of the DC Universe: It gave creators a blank slate to work with. The sad thing is that they can't help but continue to themselves into such literary corners. Millennium ... Zero Hour ... and even having The JLA take on the forces of Armageddon — and win! (Gee, and I thought coming back from defeating the Axis in the Golden Age was a tough nut to crack!)

Oh! By the way, I noticed you talking about how we're all in this "little pond" in the comics industry. You're the one who, during the '80s, complained about how the comics industry was filled with people trying to glut the market with drivel, correct? Back when you were associated with *X-Thieves*? (I have the editorials, but I know you're an honest woman and won't deny it.) I was just wondering why the change in attitude?

Always looking forward.

One last thing: There was no glut then.

*[OK, I know I'm growing positively antique, but I don't **remember** any "association" with **X-Thieves**. I guess I'm not denying it; I just don't remember it.*

The black-and-white glut killed a major distribution company and a bunch of stores in the '80s, so I've got to disagree with your close. But what Don and I tried to push continually was the value of fan-created comics published as fanzines, rather than as direct-market would-be prozines. In that way, creators could learn their craft, circulate cool stuff to a growing following, and not overwhelm a bleeding distribution system.

We've still got a small pool. Fan-created comics published as fanzines are still a terrific idea. No change in attitude.

*Didn't compare with the color glut of the early '90s — but **that** stands as a unique blip on the graph of comics sales. So far, anyway.]*

Art Hullinger

I realize the pros and cons (mostly cons) of what I believe are often called "retro-history" stories have been discussed in ***CBG***. I've read and listened but recently have really been taken aback by one of *Spider-Man: Webspinners*' three-issue-arc storylines.

One of my favorite comics memories was of being a seventh grader and reading *Amazing Spider-Man* #28 way back in June 1965. It introduced The Molten Man, featured a dynamic cover by Steve Ditko of Spidey in the dark, and also

(Continues on Page 20)

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IN THIS ISSUE: "THE FIGHT FOR LIFE" WITH **GRAHAM INGELS** ART, "JANIE SOME DAY" WITH ART BY **GEORGE EVANS**, "TO FILL THE BILL" WITH ART BY **JOE ORLANDO** AND "THE ANTIDOTE" WITH **REED CRANDALL** ART.

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Also in this issue: ***CBG***'s retailer panel looks at comics scheduled to ship in November.

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Oh, So?

From Page 18

treated us to Peter Parker's high-school graduation.

If you accept it as part of Spider-Man's canon, the *Webspinners* arc of #7, #8, and especially #9 really dilutes the special status of *Amazing* #28. The upbeat spirits of Peter in *Amazing* of that time of his life in school is replaced with what would roughly be at the same timeframe, one of Peter's biggest bouts of depression in *Webspinners*. Liz Allen's heartwarming coming-of-age self-discoveries in *Amazing* #28 is replaced by a wasp-wasted, breasts-bigger-than-her-head status as eye-candy for the 14-year-old.

Say, isn't Liz supposed to be 17?

And Flash Thompson, now sporting a build to rival Hercules, is supposed to be understood for his bullying, because of his abuse by Dad. None of the simplicity of the early Lee-Ditko stuff here, where Flash may be the way he is just because he chooses to be a jerk. No, it is mandatory PCness to relate to Flash now.

Enough. I think you can see what I'm dejected about.

Thank goodness they are only three-issue arcs.

Nelson Jimenez
75B Maple Tree Ave.
Stamford, CT 06906

I would like to mention some of my favorite recent comics. I really enjoyed *The Guns of the Dragon* by Timothy Truman. He managed to blend Dinosaur Island, Bat Lash, Enemy Ace, Vandal Savage, Slam Bradley's brother, and even ChopChop of the Blackhawks into one cool adventure.

It had a Vertigo feel but without the ugliness of those titles. I wouldn't mind seeing a sequel to this, since Truman did such an excellent job with script, characterization, and art.

My next favorite was the set of *All Star Comics* that featured the Justice Society. James Robinson is already achieving greatness with *Starman* and he is off to a heck of a start with The JSA. I especially enjoyed the Mr. Terrific one-shot *Sensation Comics* (by another spectacular writer named Mark Waid). I love the use of old characters brought into the '90s but with a '40s feel. I really hope the new JSA takes off, because I've always had a soft spot for these characters, and they can incorporate *All-Star Squadron, Sandman Mystery Theatre, Spectre, Infinity, Inc., etc.* DC has a rich history, which its writers neglect to use, and this is probably the only title where it can be utilized.

What are some of the recent favorite titles of other comics fans?

Lorraine Savage
P.O. Box 5121
Manchester, NH 03108

How do you get more girls to attend a comic book convention? Invite the male stars of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*! In a physics-defying experience in which two objects occupied the same space at the same time, the Visions '99 convention in Boston in July was part comic-book show and part teeny-bopper heaven.

In the main audience hall, a hundred or so adolescent girls all wearing camisole shirts screamed with glee at the guest appearances of James Marsters (Spike) and Nicholas Brendon (Xander). There were more exposed bra straps in that room than in a Frederick's of Hollywood catalog. For the record, Marsters' unscheduled appearance stole the show. He discussed the Buffy comics he's co-writing and said that Spike will appear in the new *Angel* TV series. With his James Dean rebel cool attitude and buffed physique, he made even my 36-year-old heart beat a little faster. However, I felt so old: When Marsters mentioned that he based Spike's British accent on *Monty Python*, silence descended among the teenage girls; you could just hear them thinking, "Who's he?"

Nicholas Brendon deserves enormous credit for graciously appearing on stage right after spending 6+ hours in a plane that was repeatedly delayed landing in a stormy Boston. Bleary-eyed and obviously exhausted, he patiently answered questions.

Since I practically have a shrine dedicated to *Babylon 5*, I refrained from passing judgment on the idol-worshipping teens. The highlight of the con for me was the unscheduled appearances of Wortham Krimmer (Cartagia), Robin Atkin Downes (Byron), Jason Carter (Marcus), and Stephen Austin (Pak'ma'ra) joining the scheduled Bill Mumy (Lennier) for an impromptu all-*Babylon 5* panel on Saturday. Austin, who shanghaied the other unscheduled guests, is a wonderful guy with interesting stories to tell from the show.

I've been to many conventions from small Creation to huge San Diego. I'm enjoying more and more the expo-style convention that affords guests the freedom to walk among the fans in the expo hall or sit at their table all day meeting fans. I found this at the Motor City con in Detroit as well as at Visions. At the big hotel cons, guests are pigeonholed into a specified hour here or there to meet and talk with fans, then whisked away into the bowels of the hotel. At Visions, Krimmer, Downes, Carter, and Austin were visible and accessible the whole day.

A disappointment for me at Visions was the flash disappearance of the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund. I was planning to give them my leftover spending money on Sunday afternoon, but I was told that the CBLDF had packed up and left by 3 on Saturday. It's a shame that such a worthy cause didn't stick around longer in an environment full of potential contributors.

Another disappointment was the con staff's practice of systematically removing audience members during featured presentations. As is becoming the practice at too many conventions, attendees must pay extra (sometimes twice as much) to get "reserved" seats at events. At Visions, *all* the seats were reserved, so "general" admission patrons were ordered to stand in the back.

Since three-fourths of the reserved seats weren't sold, the guests were left speaking to empty chairs and disgruntled fans in the back who couldn't hear them. Fans, as well as guests, were upset. And I have never before participated in or attended a costume contest in which the judges were all children under 12 randomly picked from the audience. Not a few contestants were livid.

Overall though, Visions was enjoyable: a great way to spend a rainy weekend.

[JJM's answer to Rick Norwood's trivia question: *Robert Picardo.]*

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the ANIME/MANGA SHELF

This week in Japanese comics and animation

A.D. Vision

The U.S. military ousts a sadistic Central American tyrant, giving him a thirst for vengeance. When the Bay City Hotel unveils its new supercomputer, the former ruler and his daughter devise a plan. With her hacking skills, the same computer that helps room service deliver breakfast can deliver a nuclear payload to Washington's front door. But their vengeance has one unforeseen obstacle: City Hunter. **City Hunter: Bay City Wars** is a 50-minute tape scheduled for mid-October release, priced at $19.98 dubbed and $29.95 subtitled.

Central Park Media

Check into Ogenki Clinic is a new release coming from Central Park's adults-only Anime 18 line in mid-October. Wacky Dr. Okeguri and nurse Ruko are ready to help their patients with whatever problems they have with sex. The 45-minute video is dubbed in English and priced at $29.99. The 45-minute **Return to Ogenki Clinic** is scheduled for mid-December.

The Black Knight is after another legendary artifact that's guarded by a dragon in **Record of Lodoss War: Scepter of Domination**. King Kashue and Parn must battle both the Black Knight and the demon dragon that guards the scepter. A 90-minute tape scheduled for mid-October is in $19.99 dubbed and $24.99 subtitled versions.

As the Slayers approach a showdown between the Demon Dragon King, Gaav, and the spiritual remnants of the Water Dragon King, Lina must decide if she can trust the trickster priest Xello in **The Slayers Next: Death of the Devil Dragon**. Both subtitled and dubbed versions of this 75-minute tape are priced at $19.99 and scheduled for mid-October. A $69.99 boxed set containing volumes 5 through 8 of **The Slayers** (including *Death of the Devil Dragon*) is also scheduled for mid-October.

Media Blasters

Magic Knight Rayearth begins when three junior-high girls hear a voice asking them to save a world called Cephiro. The voice begins to Princess Emeraude, whose will has maintained the peace in this magical world where belief is power. But the princess has been imprisoned and monsters are invading the land. With the last of her strength, the princess summons the three girls from Earth who are destined to become the Magic Knights, in the hope of saving her world. Media Blasters is releasing five 100-minute videos, each containing four episodes for $24.95 in both subtitled and dubbed versions. The first two tapes, **Daybreak** and **Sunrise**, are scheduled for late September. The tapes will be available separately or in a $39.95 combo pack. Mid-November should see the release of the next two tapes, **Noon** and **Twilight**, and the accompanying combo pack. The final tape, **Midnight**, is scheduled for late February release, along with a five-tape boxed set for $79.95.

Viz

Animerica Extra Vol. 2 #11, scheduled for mid-October, will be an extra-large issue celebrating the title's birthday. The issue will include an extra 40 pages (for a total of 168) with no increase over the usual $4.95 cover price.

Available now ... *Reviewed by Joyce Greenholdt*

Harlem Beat #1 — Mixx Entertainment

A Tokyo high-school student who's been a quitter all his life gets a taste of success playing half-court basketball in a vacant lot. But after a lifetime of giving up rather than working hard to improve his skills, will he keep playing when the penalty for failures is in-your-face humiliation?

That's the question facing Nate Torres in *Harlem Beat*. The creator, Yuriko Nishiyama, does an excellent job depicting the restless, frustrated teen-ager without making him so annoying that the reader gives up on Nate. It helps that Nate's best friend in school has a "can't win don't try" attitude worthy of Homer Simpson, while Nate hasn't totally given up on himself.

Nishiyama's art style is also very accessible to American audiences. Characters' eyes aren't drawn quite as big as the stereotypical anime/manga type, nor do the characters go through some of the contortions often used in manga when depicting someone who's angry or upset.

And it's a good value, too — 192 pages for less than 10 bucks. If real-world settings or sports stories suit you, give it a try.

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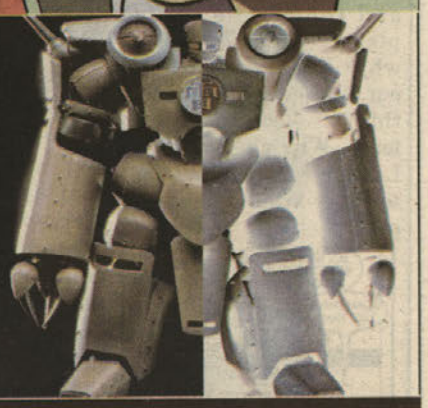

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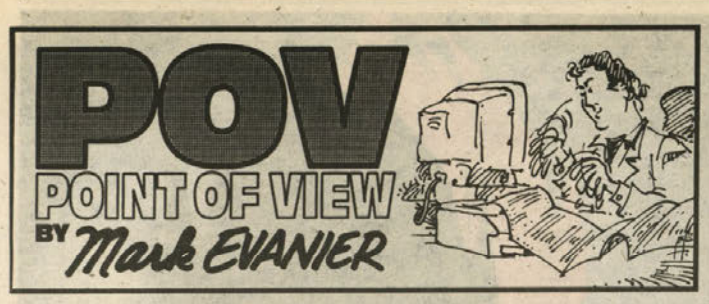

A wise philosopher — I think it was Henny Youngman — once defined *ambivalence* thusly: "Ambivalence is watching your mother-in-law drive off a cliff in your new car."

Ambivalence, for me, is the Comics Code. I'm not sure what I think about it, though perhaps I'll decide before we're done. I suppose you can look at it one of two ways ... .

1. The comic-book industry was under siege in the '50s. Parents' groups and politicians were charging that it was corrupting youngsters with fantasies that were vile, lurid, or just plain frivolous. My cynical nature — derived, natch, from years of reading comics — suggests that these two groups had less-than-ingenuous motives.

Parents, of course, never like what their kids read, watch, or listen to. Since the formation of the Edison Speaking Phonograph Company, the generation has not lived that did not shout, both individually and collectively, "Turn off that racket!" There was probably some of that in the crusade against comics. There was also the perennial campaign of every wave of parents to find something — anything but themselves — to blame for endlessly rising stats on juvenile crime, pregnancy, or apparent worthlessness.

As for politicians — well, here's the easiest paragraph of insults I ever had to write here. They're all in the *Mustela frenata* family — that's Latin for *weasel* — and they may be at their worst when they're out to "protect our children." Your scummier public servants are forever scoping out that easy issue — that brave stance against, say, stabbing puppies — that allows them to vault to the higher moral ground of decency. If it's the sort of issue wherein all opponents can be dismissed as contemptible exploiters of the helpless, so much the better.

Whatever the impetus, these two forces were inveighing against comics almost from the time *Detective Comics* #1 hit the racks. In the '50s, they got their act together and took it on the road — or, at least, to the Senate chambers. It got to be that, some argued, a self-censorship bureau was necessary or one would have been imposed at the government level — that is, if the industry was lucky. It was also highly possible, mayhaps probable, that the industry would not have survived, either, because ...

1a. Several legislatures — mainly at the state level but also at city and national levels — were discussing laws to ban or seriously restrict some or all kinds of comic books, or ...

1b. Even if no law ever banned comics, a good many retailers were getting rid of their funnybook racks. The small amount of cash they brought in did not compensate dealers for any large amount of hassle from irate parents. The business was especially vulnerable because so many vendors operated sidewalk concessions — a kind of retail outlet particularly vulnerable to city zoning controls. All it took to close some newsstands was a complaint or two to some city council.

Newsstand proprietors didn't want to lose their businesses because of comics (Who could blame them?) and magazine distributors didn't want to see newsstands close — for equally blame-free reasons. The establishment of the Comics Code gave those folks a bit of shelter — allowed them to announce that *something* had been done, the comics had been cleaned up. And so the industry was saved —

Sort of.

All of this since the "1" has been one train of thought. Another is just leaving the station ...

2. Censorship usually involves capitulation on some basic moral principle, and that's never healthy. This is even true of self-censorship when it's involuntarily or grudgingly enacted. Insofar as I can tell, the Comics Code was not instituted because the movers and shakers of the funnybook biz had some divine, intra-industry revelation ...

Jack S. Liebowitz [President of National Periodical Publications, now known as DC Comics] did not turn to John L. Goldwater [President of Archie Comics, now known as Archie Comics] and say, "Hey, I've suddenly realized that our comics are disgusting! I'm going to clean mine up!"

And Goldwater did not look back at Liebowitz and say, "By God, you're right! We're all publishing awful, harmful comics! Let's do it together, Jack! Let's help each other purify our books! And I'll bet Martin Goodman [owner of Magazine Management Co., now known as Marvel] and Leon Harvey [an executive with the Harvey Comics Group, now known as defunct] would like to get in on this!"

"You're right, John! God, I feel so cleansed ..."

This, as I said, did not happen. What did happen was that the big publishers — those four plus a few others — realized that the small publishers were (a) creating the problems described above and (b) enjoying a distinct advantage on the racks that remained.

Think of it: Here I am — I'm John L. Goldwater, head honcho at Archie Comics. I'm very proud of my line. I have my whole life invested in it, and it makes a very respectable profit for me and my family and partners — and not just from publishing. Archie, Jughead, Betty, and Veronica are world-famous characters and we make money licensing them to other companies.

But there are other companies out there ruining my marketplace! Those sleazy guys — they don't care about comics. It's just a fast buck to them with their horror titles and their crime books. They're giving us a bad name, bringing on censorship and anti-comics laws — and what's worse is ... I can't compete with them!

They can load their comics with sex and violence — those things shouldn't sell but they do — and I can't play that game. I have my valuable, wholesome properties to protect: Archie and the gang. Oh, I'll put Betty and Veronica in swimsuits in any issue that comes out within four months of Summer on either side — and we'll fill the other months with slumber parties and girls in shortie pajamas and nighties ...

But I can't compete with those comics full of cleavage and stocking-tops. I can't do that in the Archie titles and I can't have my company associated with that kind of product at all. I have to protect the image (and merchandising potential) of Archie and his friends.

Those catchpenny horror-comics guys won't lose out if comics go under; they'll just move on to sleazy detective and sex magazines or something. They don't have properties to preserve ... they don't have their whole lives built around comics. The guys like me — and Liebowitz and Harvey and Goodman — we have to do something!

OK, I'm M.E. again, here to admit that I never met John Goldwater and have no idea what went through his mind when he took a strong initiative in forming the Comics Code. But I do know one result: For the next umpteen years, men like Goldwater and Liebowitz — alleged competitors — wound up controlling most of the comic-book business. The CMAA included the major printers who were set up to print comics at competitive prices and the major distributors who could get the merchandise to the buyers. This is not exactly how business is done in a free market economy.

Actually, there were several initiatives and several codes. In the 1940s, many publishers set up their own little self-censorship operations, usually hiring a few doctor-types whose names and degrees could be ballyhooed. How much the advisors actually had an impact on content is arguable — but, if some parent complained or a reporter inquired, a list of guidelines could be sent, a roster of "experts" could be claimed to be keeping a watchful eye on the comics.

One such authority was psychologist William Marston — famed as the inventor of the lie detector — who signed on with All-American Comics around 1941. Dr. Marston had written an article that was highly critical of the new dime publications, and All-American Publisher M.C. Gaines decided to either — depending on one's point of view — seek out Dr. Marston's counsel or buy him off. Soon after, Dr. Marston created and wrote Wonder Woman under the name "Charles Moulton." (One wonders if the pseudonym was to safeguard his dignity as a man of medicine or to keep up the appearance that he was an outside and independent consultant.)

The first multi-company code was formed in 1948 in response to a flurry of anti-comics articles in the press, many of them by the most famous master super-villain in comics history, Dr. Fredric Wertham. This banding together was shunned by the larger companies — no DC, no Marvel, no Archie, no Harvey — and it collapsed from their lack of involvement. At the time, they all thought their individual codes and public relations efforts would shield them.

That belief took a major hit in the Spring of 1954, when Senator Robert Hendrickson gaveled to order an inquiry into the comic-book field by the Senate Subcommittee on Juvenile Delinquency. Estes Kefauver (D, Tenn) was its most vocal member and later in '54, when the eternal pendulum of politics gave control of the Senate to the Democrats, Kefauver became chairman just in time to supervise its report. As a result, the whole enterprise came to be nicknamed "The Kefauver Commission."

In hindsight, the investigation seems to have been launched on a misguided search for scapegoats. It was, perhaps, a bit better-intended than it now appears. Kefauver had made his reputation as a staunch crusader against organized crime — not an ignoble goal — and that

(Continues on Page 26)

By Maggie Thompson

Superman #151's story — "We're Back!" — is written by Jeph Loeb, pencilled by Mike McKone, and inked by Marlo Alquiza. It's a beautiful set-up for the new Superman world, a world which long-time fans, readers who have begun to read the series recently, and those who know it only from TV will find pretty much equally accessible.

But it's more than an issue-long establishing shot. With terrific supporting art, scripter Loeb has provided narration by Lois Lane — and offered a plot twist with a pay-off which may be years in coming. The dialogue is pleasant and natural (see below), and the art is wonderfully detailed but clear.

The Planet is back, and the cast is in its place — but how? And why? Readers will find out Oct. 6, which is when this is scheduled for release. Why do *you* think Luthor sold *The Planet* to Perry White? Check it out.

SO, WHAT ARE YOU WORKING ON? "CAT STUCK IN TREE?"
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Y'KNOW, CLARK, IF ALL I HAD TO DO WAS WRITE ABOUT MYSELF ALL DAY, I'D HAVE IT PRETTY CUSHY.
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WHAT HAVE YOU DONE... YOU LOUSY LOOKING-GLASS?
I'VE TAUGHT PLASTIC MAN A LESSON! I DON'T THINK HE'LL EVER BOTHER ME AGAIN!
OH, PLAS! WILL YOU EVER BE ABLE TO PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER AGAIN?

... and after

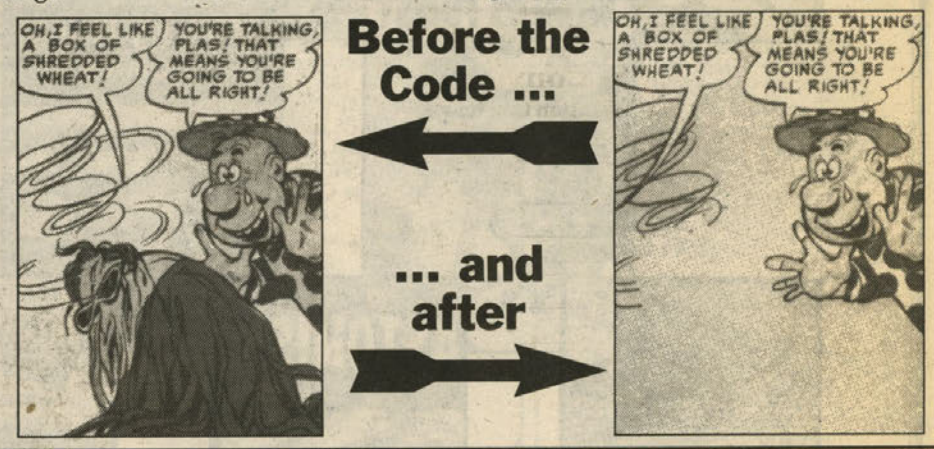
AND I'M VERY USEFUL AROUND THE HOUSE, TOO! I CAN SLICE A LOAF OF BREAD BEFORE YOU CAN SAY PUMPERNICKEL!
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE... YOU-YOU--- LOOKING-GLASS?
I'VE TAUGHT PLASTIC MAN A LESSON! I DON'T THINK HE'LL EVER BOTHER ME AGAIN!
OH, PLAS! WILL YOU EVER BE ABLE TO PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER AGAIN?

To demonstrate the effect the Code had in its earliest days, here (and on Page 30) are scenes from a pair of Plastic Man stories which were published before the Code and reprinted, in censored form, after the Code.

Reading the Code itself, it isn't easy to see anything extreme about it which would cause such a complete change — until thought is given to the implications of "General Standards Part C." (See Page 28.)

*The first time Plastic Man fought Reflecto, the Astounding Mirror Man (**Plastic Man** #46, May 1954), he was sliced to ribbons by the man of glass. The next time (**Plastic Man** #63, July 1956), thanks to the Comics Code, Plastic Man had no visible injuries — in fact, Plastic Man himself was no longer visible, since the Code required that his sliced-up body not be shown, although no changes were made in the dialogue. At the conclusion of the story, Reflecto plunged off the roof of a building as Woozy remarked (in the pre-Code version), "Oh! Oh! This building is sixteen stories high!" In the post-Code version, Woozy's dialogue was changed to, "Right into the arms of the law! They have a net below!" The police had not had any time to set up a net and, even if they had had, Woozy could not have seen such a net from where he was standing, but that detail didn't matter. Woozy's closing pun ("You could say the case broke itself and it was really a shattering experience!") was intact but meaningless, if Reflecto survived the rooftop plunge.*

Plastic Man #46 © 1954 Comic Magazines; *Plastic Man* #63 © 1956 Comic Magazines


OH, I FEEL LIKE A BOX OF SHREDDED WHEAT!
YOU'RE TALKING, PLAS! THAT MEANS YOU'RE GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT!
Before the Code ...
... and after
OH, I FEEL LIKE A BOX OF SHREDDED WHEAT!
YOU'RE TALKING, PLAS! THAT MEANS YOU'RE GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT!

Point of View (From Page 24)

had led him to comic books.

Comics were, after all, handled by interstate magazine distributors. And some interstate magazine distributors were (he said, choosing his words cautiously) believed to be linked with certain elements of organized crime. Today, we think of the inquest as an attack on Wally Wood and Jack Davis and all the wonderfully talented folks who created the better horror and crime comics of the day. From Kefauver's vantage point, the folks selling this stuff (the good *and* the bad — and there was a lot of bad) to the nation's children were cold-steel mobsters, or a breed not far removed.

In the hearings, a number of experts and involved parties spoke against comics, including our old pal, Doc Wertham. Several prominent newspaper strip artists came in to explain that they didn't do the kind of comics that the committee was scrutinizing, and Dell Comics Vice President Helen Meyer dropped by to make the same point. Only a few courageous individuals spoke for comics, most notably William M. Gaines, owner of E.C. Comics.

As has been recounted elsewhere (and as will be discussed here, next week), Gaines' testimony went badly. He went home with a pain in his stomach and the knowledge that he'd hurt more than he'd helped. Determined to fight back, he called upon various publishers and rallied them to assemble and discuss the problem. He would later become one of the severest critics of the entity that he launched.

The new organization, Gaines later claimed, started by banning the words *horror, terror*, and *weird* from being used on comic-book covers. Since he was the publisher of *Vault of Horror* and *Weird Science-Fantasy* and was just launching a new book entitled *The Crypt of Terror*, Gaines' disenchantment must have been immediate.

He soon distanced himself from the organization — the Comics Magazine Association of America — and its solution to the dilemma, The Comics Code. In addition to laundering the wares of its member companies, the CMAA was also established to — I'm quoting from an ancient press release here — "... promote the good name and good work of comic book publishers everywhere, and to let the world know that comics can be educational, informative and actually good for children."

(They never put that goal in print in any comic book to my knowledge. We'd all probably have given them up if they had.)

All the major publishers joined this new brotherhood of ostensible competitors — all but Dell Comics, Gilberton, and, at first, E.C. Dell was then the biggest publisher in the marketplace, focusing primarily on licensed titles, including the Disney comics. Since *Donald Duck* was not in the direct line of fire, the management of Dell didn't see why they should lend their name and moral cover to the purveyors of horror and crime comics.

More importantly, Dell's sales gave them clout. Most of the firms that distributed comics nationwide had joined the CMAA and were either refusing to carry non-Code comics or discouraging them. But, since Dell was then commanding somewhere over a third of all comic-book sales, their distributor wasn't about to dump them. (A few years later, that distributor — American News — got out of that trade, owing to a federal anti-trust suit. Dell immediately started its own distributorship, thereby eliminating a middleman and bypassing the whole CMAA and its Code altogether.)

Instead of slapping on the Code symbol, the folks at Dell composed the deathless Dell Pledge to Parents which insisted, "Dell Comics are good comics." They actually were pretty good comics, in several senses of that adjective, and they went unscathed, despite their non-participation in the Code. (It also probably helped that they had a contract with Western Printing and didn't have to dicker with any of the printers who had pledged the CMAA.)

Dell's opting out infuriated other publishers, though, and prompted a number of long-standing grudges. In the late '60s, writing an article for a fanzine, I did a by-mail interview with the gent who was then administrator of the Comics Code. I asked about the absence from its ranks of Western Publishing (Gold Key), which had formerly handled the editorial and printing end of Dell Comics. He wrote back that, while Dell and Western had never officially joined the CMAA, they had requested copies of the Code and had informally applied its sage guidelines to their comics.

A few years later, after I went to work for Western, I happened to show the article I'd written to a senior executive of the company. The gent immediately turned bright orange — or, in comic-book terminology, Y2R2 — and began yelling, "That's a lie! They kept sending their lousy paperwork over and we kept throwing it in the garbage without reading it." (Actually, he didn't say "lousy." He used another word — one which wouldn't pass the Comics Code even if Chris Rock revised it.) He was still angry at the whole CMAA and any suggestion that his company had benefited from its existence.

As for the other houses that didn't join: Gilberton didn't feel that its *Classics Illustrated* line was threatened. Matter of fact, some said, they were hoping that the other publishers would collapse, leaving the market wide open for their appallingly abridged literary classics. Besides, most of their circulation was not done via conventional distributors but through companies that sold educational materials to schools.

And then there was Gaines — poor Bill Gaines, whose E.C. comics had been at the center of the anti-comics crusades ... Bill Gaines, whose senate testimony had thrown gasoline on the witch-burning.

What became of his line? Well, it went away, of course. Next week in this spot, we'll discuss why that was — and why, the more I think of it, the less ambivalent I'm becoming about the Comics Code. And my opinion of it is not changing for the better ...

Mark Evanier gets his mail at PMB 303, 363 S. Fairfax Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90036-3124, and on the 'net at me@evanier.com.

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CODEKEEPERS

Change and continuity in the Comics Magazine Association of America

by Patrick Daniel O'Neill

By Patrick Daniel O'Neill

Despite a 45-year history that has seen the membership of the Comics Magazine Association of America reduced to just three publishers (four now, with the recent addition of Dark Horse), its president said he is positive that the organization can remain a viable and vital part of the industry.

"Almost once a month I get contacted by some reporter to find out how comics are still corrupting the youth of America — and I have to defend it," Michael Silberkleit told *CBG*. Silberkleit, who is also president of CMAA member Archie Comic Publications, added that the association has plans to expand its membership and take a more proactive part in promoting comics. The group recently held meetings at Wizard World Chicago and Comic-Con International: San Diego, both designed to invite new companies to join the group, including such distributors as Diamond.

Silberkleit said it would be easier to defend the industry, if the CMAA membership were more inclusive (current members, other than Archie and Dark Horse, are Marvel and DC). "More than 99% of the time, the publishers the media complain about are not CMAA members. I basically have to say, 'It's a free country; anyone can publish anything he likes,' " he said. "We have a rule in the CMAA that any comic book that goes onto the newsstand has to carry the seal of our approval process, the Comics Code Authority. But in the direct market [where the majority of comics are sold], all the CMAA members except Archie have a line of titles that are not Code-approved and not sold on the newsstand.

"But my job as president of the CMAA is to defend the industry as a whole and frequently that includes defending companies that aren't part of the association."

However, Silberkleit was quick to add that, although that little white stamp on the cover of newsstand titles is the most public part of the association's work, there is more to the CMAA than the Comics Code. He noted that the association runs a successful marketing program for its members, one that has been important in keeping comic books in the "real world" of magazine distribution and sale.

"We have a marketing committee that meets monthly to talk about campaigns and programs to get us into the various mass market outlets," he said, going on to discuss a recent well-publicized problem. "There was a point where Wal-Mart tossed all its comics out because it determined that one title was offensive. A chain like Wal-Mart can't take a chance — one complaint and everything goes. So we went to Wal-Mart to make the case for comic books: 'That was one title, one incident, look at all the

The Code THEN...

Code of the Comics Magazine Association of America · 1954 version

Every comics fan knows about the Comics Code, but few seem to know just what its provisions are. Praised by some parents' groups and censors, damned by comic-book buffs, and bemoaned by those who consider censorship of any kind to be a violation of individual rights, the Code completely changed the direction of comic art development from its instigation.

The version which follows on this page is the original Comics Code, the one instituted in the mid-1950s to stem the tide of juvenile delinquency by cleaning up the comic books, judged by many to be the primary cause of crimes by the young. Grammatical errors ("neither ... or" and the like) are in the original Code. On the facing page is the current versions of the Code as it stands today.

Code for Editorial Matter General Standards Part A

1) Crimes shall never be presented in such a way as to create sympathy for the criminal, to promote distrust of the forces of law and justice, or to inspire others with a desire to imitate criminals.

2) No comics shall explicitly present the unique details and methods of a crime.

3) Policemen, judges, government officials and respected institutions shall never be presented in such a way as to create disrespect for established authority.

4) If crime is depicted it shall be as a sordid and unpleasant activity.

5) Criminals shall not be presented so as to be rendered glamorous or to occupy a position which creates a desire for emulation.

6) In every instance good shall triumph over evil and the criminal punished for his misdeeds.

7) Scenes of excessive violence shall be prohibited. Scenes of brutal torture, excessive and unnecessary knife and gun play, physical agony, gory and gruesome crime shall be eliminated.

8) No unique or unusual methods of concealing weapons shall be shown.

9) Instances of law enforcement officers dying as a result of a criminal's activities should be discouraged.

10) The crime of kidnapping shall never be portrayed in any detail, nor shall any profit accrue to the abductor or kidnapper. The criminal or the kidnapper must be punished in every case.

11) The letters of the word "crime" on a comics magazine cover shall never be appreciably greater in dimension than the other words contained in the title. The word "crime" shall never appear alone on a cover.

12) Restraint in the use of the word "crime" in titles or subtitles shall be exercised.

General Standards Part B

1) No comics magazine shall use the word horror or terror in its title.

2) All scenes of horror, excessive bloodshed, gory or gruesome crimes, depravity, lust, sadism, masochism shall not be permitted.

3) All lurid, unsavory, gruesome illustrations shall be eliminated.

4) Inclusion of stories dealing with evil shall be used or shall be published only where the intent is to illustrate a moral issue and in no case shall evil be presented alluringly nor as to injure the sensibilities of the reader.

5) Scenes dealing with, or instruments associated with walking dead, torture, vampires and vampirism, ghouls, cannibalism and werewolfism are prohibited.

General Standards Part C

All elements or techniques not specifically mentioned herein, but which are contrary to the spirit and intent of the Code, and are considered violations of good taste or decency, shall be prohibited.

Dialogue

1) Profanity, obscenity, smut, vulgarity, or words or symbols which have acquired undesirable meanings are forbidden.

2) Special precautions to avoid references to physical afflictions or deformities shall be taken.

3) Although slang and colloquialisms are acceptable, excessive use should be discouraged and wherever possible good grammar shall be employed.

Religion

1) Ridicule or attack on any religious or racial group is never permissible.

Costume

1) Nudity in any form is prohibited, as is indecent or undue exposure.

2) Suggestive and salacious illustrations or suggestive posture is unacceptable.

3) All characters shall be depicted in dress reasonably acceptable to society.

4) Females shall be drawn realistically without exaggeration of any physical qualities.

Note: It should be recognized that all prohibitions dealing with costume, dialogue or artwork apply as specifically to the cover of a comic magazine as they do to the contents.

Marriage and Sex

1) Divorce shall not be treated humorously nor represented as desirable.

2) Illicit sex relations are neither to be hinted at or portrayed. Violent love scenes as well as sexual abnormalities are unacceptable.

3) Respect for parents, the moral code, and for honorable behavior shall be fostered. A sympathetic understanding of the problems of love is not a license for morbid distortion.

4) The treatment of love-romance stories shall emphasize the value of the home and the sanctity of marriage.

5) Passion or romantic interest shall never be treated in such a way as to stimulate the lower and baser emotions.

6) Seduction and rape shall never be shown or suggested.

7) Sex perversion or any inference to same is strictly forbidden.

Code for Advertising Matter

These regulations are applicable to all magazines published by members of the Comics Magazine Association of America, Inc. Good taste shall be the guiding principle in the acceptance of advertising.

1) Liquor and tobacco advertising is not acceptable.

2) Advertising of sex or sex instruction books are unacceptable.

3) The sale of picture postcards, "pin-ups," "art studies," or any other reproduction of nude or seminude figures is prohibited.

4) Advertising for the sale of knives, or realistic gun facsimiles is prohibited.

5) Advertising for the sale of fireworks is prohibited.

6) Advertising dealing with the sale of gambling equipment or printed matter dealing with gambling shall not be accepted.

7) Nudity with meretricious purpose and salacious postures shall not be permitted in the advertising of any product; clothed figures shall never be presented in such a way as to be offensive or contrary to good taste or morals.

8) To the best of his ability, each publisher shall ascertain that all statements made in advertisements conform to fact and avoid misrepresentation.

9) Advertisement of medical, health, or toiletry products of questionable nature are to be rejected. Advertisements for medical, health or toiletry products endorsed by the American Medical Association, or the American Dental Association, shall be deemed acceptible if they conform with all other conditions of the Advertising Code.

others.' Slowly we will bring comics back into Wal-Mart.

"A more typical example is the program that has been in Waldenbooks for many years. That's a CMAA program. We went to Eastern News, Waldenbooks' distributor, to purchase racks and get the CMAA publishers' titles into their stores. It's been very successful, and Waldenbooks' bottom line is improved by the sales of comics in their stores."

But the Code remains the part of the CMAA that creators, retailers, and readers see the most, and Silberkleit is concerned that many in the industry don't understand why — even after four and a half decades — the organization says it is still necessary.

"A lot of people in our industry — especially on the creative side — don't realize how close we are to a government-societal push to shut down and censor our business," he said. "I saw this very strongly with the aftermath of the school shootings in Littleton, Colo. The calls for controls on film and TV and video games can spread in a flash to what kids read, as well. Times are changing; the climate in this country is not what it was a decade or more ago. People in this industry have to realize that."

So what is the Comics Code? What does it allow and prohibit? The answer is in the sidebar. But how is it administered? And by whom?

The answer to that last question is Comics Code Administrator Holly Munter Koenig. Koenig said she is the final and really the *only* authority on approval by

...and NOW

Comics Magazine Association of America Principles of the Comics Code Authority

Current version

Preamble

The Comics Magazine Association of America was formed in 1954 by a group of publishers committed to the principle that the public deserved decent and wholesome comic books as entertainment for children. To that end, those publishers set content guidelines, created a reviewing authority and established the Comics Code Seal. This seal was to appear on covers of CMAA member comics as a way of communicating to the public their shared commitment to uphold these standards.

While the comic book industry has changed over the intervening three decades, as has almost every other facet of American life, the publisher members of the CMAA remain committed to providing decent and wholesome comic books for children. This new updated version of the Comics Code is a reaffirmation of that commitment.

The member publishers of the Comics Magazine Association of America hereby reaffirm our joint commitment to our shared principle: that comics carrying the Comics Code Seal be ones that a parent can purchase with confidence that the contents uphold basic American moral and cultural values.

Institutions

In general, recognizable national, social, political, cultural, ethnic and racial groups, religious institutions, and law enforcement authorities will be portrayed in a positive light. These include the government on the national, state, and municipal levels, including all of its numerous departments, agencies, and services; law enforcement agencies such as the state and municipal police, and other actual law enforcement agencies such as the FBI, the Secret Service, the CIA, etc.; the military, both United States and foreign; known religious organizations; ethnic advancement agencies; foreign leaders and representatives of other governments and national groups; and social groups identifiable by lifestyle, such as homosexuals, the economically disadvantaged, the economically privileged, the homeless, senior citizens, minors, etc.

Socially responsible attitudes will be favorably depicted and reinforced. Socially inappropriate, irresponsible, or illegal behavior will be shown to be specific actions of a specific individual or group of individuals, and not meant to reflect the routine activity of any general group of real persons.

If, for dramatic purposes, it is necessary to portray such a group of individuals in a negative manner, the name of the group and its individual members will be fictitious, and its activities will not be clearly identifiable with the routine activities of any real group.

Stereotyped images and activities will not be used to degrade specific national, ethnic, cultural, or socioeconomic groups.

Language

The language in a comic book will be appropriate for a mass audience that includes children. Good grammar and spelling will be encouraged. Publishers will exercise good taste and a responsible attitude as to the use of language in their comics. Obscene and profane words, symbols, and gestures are prohibited.

References to physical handicaps, illnesses, ethnic backgrounds, sexual preferences religious beliefs, and race, when presented in a derogatory manor for dramatic purposes, will be shown to be unacceptable.

Violence

Violent actions or scenes are acceptable within the context of a comic book story when dramatically appropriate. Violent behavior will not be shown as acceptable. If it is presented in a realistic manner, care should be taken to present the natural repercussions of such actions. Publishers should avoid excessive levels of violence, excessively graphic depictions of violence, and excessive bloodshed or gore. Publishers will not present detailed information instructing readers how to engage in imitable violent actions.

Characterizations

Character portrayals will be carefully crafted and show sensitivity to national, ethnic, religious, sexual, political, and socioeconomic orientations. if it is dramatically appropriate for one character to demean another because of his or her sex, ethnicity, religion, sexual preference, political orientation, socioeconomic status, or disabilities, the demeaning words or actions will be clearly shown to be wrong or ignorant in the course of the story. Stories depicting characters subject to physical, mental, or emotional problems or with economic disadvantages should never assign ultimate responsibility for these conditions to the character themselves. Heroes should be role models and should reflect the prevailing social attitudes.

Substance Abuse

Healthy, wholesome lifestyles will be presented as desirable. However, the use and abuse of controlled substances, legal and illicit, are facts of modern existence, and may be portrayed when dramatically appropriate.

The consumption of alcohol, narcotics, pharmaceuticals, and tobacco will not be depicted in a glamorous way. When the line between the normal, responsible consumption of legal substances and the abuse of these substances is crossed, the distinction will be made clear and the adverse consequences of such abuse will be noted.

Substance abuse is defined as the use of illicit drugs and the self-destructive use of such products as tobacco (including chewing tobacco), alcohol, prescription drugs, over-the-counter drugs, etc.

Use of dangerous substances both legal and illegal should be shown with restraint as necessary to the context of the story. However, storylines should not be detailed to the point of serving as instruction manuals for substance abuse. In each story, the abuser will be shown to pay the physical, mental, and/or social penalty for his or her abuse.

Crime

While crimes and criminals may be portrayed for dramatic purposes, crimes will never be presented in such a way as to inspire readers with a desire to imitate them nor will criminals be portrayed in such a manner as to inspire readers to emulate them. Stories will not present unique imitable techniques or methods of committing crimes.

Attire and Sexuality

Costumes in a comic book will be considered to be acceptable if they fall within the scope of contemporary styles and fashions.

Scenes and dialogue involving adult relationships will be presented with good taste, sensitivity, and in a manner which will be considered acceptable by a mass audience. Primary human sexual characteristics will never be shown. Graphic sexual activity will never be depicted.

Administrative Procedure

I

All comics which member publishers wish to bear the Comics Code Seal will be submitted to the Code administrator for review prior to publication. The administrator will review them according to the guidance he has received from the permanent committee and will either approve them to bear the seal, or return them to the publisher with his comments. The responsible editor from the publisher will either revise the comic in accordance with those comments, or discuss with the administrator the concerns raised with him and reach agreement on how the comic can properly bear the Code Seal either without being revised or with a mutually agreeable set of alternative revisions. In the event no agreement can be reached between the editor and the administrator, the matter will be referred to the permanent committee, which will act promptly to determine if, or under what conditions. the comic in question can bear the Code Seal. Decisions of the permanent committee will be binding on the publishers, who agree not to place the Code Seal on any comic on which it is not authorized.

II

The members of the Comics Magazine Association of America include publishers who elect to publish comics that are not intended to bear the Code Seal, and that therefore need not go through the approval process described above. Among the comics in this category may be titles intended for adult readers. Member publishers hereby affirm that we will distribute these publications only through those distribution channels in which it is possible to notify retailers and distributors of their content, and thus help the publications reach their intended audiences. The member publishers agree to refrain from distributing these publications through those distribution channels that, like the traditional newsstand, are serviced by individuals who are unaware of the content of specific publications before placing them on display.

III

Recognizing that no document can address all the complex issues and concerns that face our changing society, the member publishers have established a permanent committee composed of the senior editor of each member's staff. This committee will meet regularly to review those issues and concerns as they affect our publications, and to meet with and guide the administrator of the Comics Code, and will replace the previous written guidelines of the Comics Code.

Before the Code ...

JUST LOOK AT ALL THAT WONDERFUL FOOD!
I JUST SAW SOMEONE AT THE WINDOW! WE CAN'T LET THEM CATCH US WITH ALL THIS LOOT!
MAKE IT FAST, SAM! I HEAR SOMEONE COMING!
THIS IS A PLEASURE! DOWN THE HATCH!
OINK!

... and after

JUST LOOK AT ALL THAT WONDERFUL FOOD!
I JUST SAW SOMEONE AT THE WINDOW! WE CAN'T LET THEM CATCH US WITH ALL THIS LOOT!
MAKE IT FAST, SAM! I HEAR SOMEONE COMING!
THIS IS A PLEASURE! DOWN THE HATCH!

*In one story — a daffy account of twin brothers whose insatiable appetites led them to eat the city into a state of famine — scenes showed the gluttonous food thieves devouring a can of peas (can and all) and live goldfish from a pet shop (**Plastic Man** #46, May 54).*

*In the Code-approved reprinting of the story (**Plastic Man** #63, July 56), the can of peas became a candy bar, and the goldfish became a box of fish food.*

Other changes were more extreme, such as a giant pickle which disappeared and an assortment of meats, including a live pig, which became a single orange.

*— **Plastic Man** #46 (May 54) © 1954 Comic Magazines; **Plastic Man** #63 (Jul 56) © 1956 Comic Magazines*

Before the Code ... **... and after**

the CCA. "The review staff consists, really, of me," she remarked. "We have a staff that works for the CMAA itself, and some of them will open up material as it comes and give a quick review before I see it. If they see something that might be problematic, they'll flag it for me. But I'm the one who is responsible for it; I read everything that comes in.

"That gives consistency, which I think is important. Not only do you have to understand the guidelines — and I think everybody here does that — but people can feel differently about religion and ethics and things like that, and you have to have the same person making the decisions to have consistency."

Koenig explained that she gets black-and-white photocopies of every completed page in a comic book that comes in for approval. Generally, she can turn the story around in 48 hours.

Koenig doesn't operate in a vacuum. She understands that societal and cultural attitudes are always changing, which is why the Code has been revised at least twice since 1954, the last revision in 1989. And she knows that each time she decides to let something in a comic-book story go through or insists on a change, she is setting a standard. "I think each decision I make sets a precedent for future cases.

"I'm very aware of that. I watch that all the time, especially when it comes to language and costumes. For slang or foreign words, I'm very fortunate that I work in New York City in an office where people speak a zillion languages. When I see something I don't understand, I check around for someone who does; I don't just let it go. With slang, it depends on what it is — sometimes a writer makes up words that sound like curse words and that's OK. It's not a curse word, it just sounds bad."

There was concern expressed in the media about a recent movie sequel's title — a title that included a British vulgarity for intercourse. But Koenig says that's a case that wouldn't bother her. "I'd let 'shagged' go by. Kids are seeing it themselves. If you look up 'shagged' in the dictionary, the slang meaning probably isn't there." And, indeed, the 1992 edition of *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* does not give that usage.

Although today's Code is less restrictive than it once was, it is not as lenient as the standards used by many other parts of the entertainment world, including television. Both Silberkleit and Koenig said that much of what reaches the screen on pre-9 p.m. network TV wouldn't pass muster under the Comics Code.

"What's OK in early prime time is not OK in a Code-approved comic book," Koenig said. "That's been brought up a lot by publishers. We're actually a lot more conservative than prime-time TV, especially with language. Unless the Code is changed again, those words would never be allowed."

However, as the Code makes clear, Koenig is not always the last word. There is an appeals process: A committee composed of the senior editors at each of the four CMAA members can review a challenged decision, as well make further revisions in the Code itself.

One more point: Use of the Code seal is not limited to CMAA members. Nonmember publishers can submit material for approval, pay a fee for that approval, and receive permission to put the seal on their publications. Currently, Bongo (publisher of *The Simpsons*) appears to be the only publisher taking advantage of this program. (Silberkleit also noted that such publishers are not permitted to participate in the CMAA marketing and racking program.)

Although the Code is virtually required for newsstand distribution in the United States, most publishers today concentrate on the direct market — and that includes, as noted earlier, three out of four of the CMAA members. Silberkleit is apparently unconcerned by the non-Code titles produced by his fellow publishers. "I think the non-Code comics published by member publishers are intended for an older audience, and my feeling has always been — and I've said this publicly — that it's the parents' responsibility to see what their kids read, when they are at the younger age," he said.

Surprisingly, at least one CMAA member is not averse to criticizing the Comics Code. In *Comics between the Panels*, a book published by Dark Horse, authors Steve Duin and Mike Richardson wrote, "The Code has as much impact on the industry today as Dr. Wertham's ghost" (a reference to Dr. Fredric Wertham, whose campaign ending in the book *Seduction of the Innocent* was a major catalyst in anti-comics publicity of the 1950s).

Silberkleit was quick to comment on that criticism. "Dr. Wertham's ghost! Wertham was responsible for almost killing this industry, and I certainly don't hold with what he said.

"I know where Dark Horse is coming from. Isn't it interesting that they talk about that but then they joined the association? They complain and tell the world why they didn't want to join and say, 'We had to join or we couldn't sell our comic books on the newsstand.' Dark Horse publishes *Star Wars* — I wish I were publishing it — and they have the Code seal on those. They also publish a lot of comics without the seal."

Silberkleit returned to his view of the shifting cultural views of the late 1990s. "I think when people make statements like that they lose track of what's going on in this country — that there is a mass movement in this country to crack down on the media. The more we have publicized violent acts, the more there will be movements to police everything in the media, and that includes comic books. We lived through that in the '50s. It's not too hard for me to conceive of it happening again.

"I don't think it's in anybody's best interest to slam the Code. If you don't like the Code, don't put it on your comics. If you don't like the association, don't join. But don't take potshots at something in your own industry."

Silberkleit said he is determined to keep the Comics Magazine Association an important part of the comic-book industry and to keep the comic-book industry an important part of American life.

"I think the future of the CMAA is to make the public aware of the wonderful material the publishers are putting out," he added. "Comics are a kid's first reading experience — you can't say anything bad about that. They promote reading. As an association, I think promoting that part of what we do is the future for us.

"I think one of the problems is that the fun has gone out of this business. We have to put the fun back into it — maybe that means more involvement with the distributor, and the distributor making it more fun for the retailer, by including more social involvement like conventions and meetings."

Archie Comics did not have a booth at such conventions as this year's Wizard World, Comic Book Expo, or Comic-Con International: San Diego. "That costs money — and this isn't a time when people can spend lavishly on stuff like that — but I think the worst thing is when you get a perception that the industry is in trouble or declining and it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy.

"You have to make it fun and you have to make it positive," he said, noting the negative publicity the industry has received, even in the business and investment press lately. "When Marvel was in Chapter 11, I heard a lot of talk from business associates and friends about how the whole industry was about to go under — and I had to explain that 1) that was just one company and 2) even in Chapter 11, Marvel was still selling an awful lot of comics. It went into bankruptcy because of a lot of bad business decisions that had nothing to do with comic books."

Silberkleit returned to one of his favorite themes to conclude. "The Comics Code seal basically means that the comic book is good reading for kids — and kids are the future of our industry. I think it's important to get that across. If you can't bring out a product that's good and safe reading for kids, you're eventually going to lose the incoming reader. They start out with the Code-approved comics and then they move on. But without new kids coming in, there won't *be* an industry."

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285. 8 Early 1960's Foreign Language Comics (Superman, Blackhawk, Tomahawk, Mystery in Space, etc.) Avg. VG 15.00
286. 200 Different 1970's Comics. Marvel, DC, Others Avg. FN+ 65.00
287. 19 Different Marvel Westerns. Early 70's. Condition Varies, Avg. G/VG 10.00
288. 300 1970's DC Comics. Mostly all different, possibly 10-15 random duplicates. Condition Varies, Avg. FN. Nearly all are at least a nice VG 129.00
289. 375 1970's Marvel Comics. Mostly all different, possibly 10-20 random duplicates. Avg. FN- 129.00
290. 3 Pulps (1949-1955), 3 Little Golden Books 1948-50 (Donald Duck, Pinocchio), 3 Alfred Hitchcock Mystery Magazines (Early 60's), The Greatest in Baseball (1969) Avg. VG 15.00
291. 15 Skywald Comics: Butch Cassidy 1 (2), Sundance Kid 1 (6), 2 (2), Wild Western Action 1 (3), 2, Heap 1. Condition Varies, Avg. G/VG 10.00
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293. 24 Different 10¢ Cover Price Comics. Condition Varies, Avg. G 18.00
294. 55 Assorted Giveaways, Foreign Language Comics, Top Comics, Other Oddball Items. A few random duplicates. Most are 70's or Earlier Avg. VG+ 35.00
295. 72 Different 12¢ & 15¢ Cover Price Gold Key Comics. Many different titles, mostly humor. Condition Varies, Avg. G/VG ..42.00
296. 53 Different 1970's #1 Issues. Includes the 25 Issues Listed in Lot #184, Plus: Godzilla, Devil Dinosaur, Howard the Duck, Sandman, Starfire, Stalker, Steel, Super Friends, Warlord, Planet of the Apes, Flintstones, Son of Satan, Marvel Chillers, Dynamic Classics, Yogi Bear, Welcome Back Kotter & Others, Avg. VF+ 12.00
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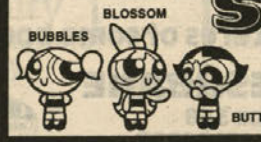

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Sep 4-5 CA, Ventura. Comic Book & Card Convention. T: 8', F: $35., A: $3., under 10 free. George Chase, PH: 805-653-6790.

Sep 12 CA, Bakersfield. Comic Book & Toy Fest Hodel's Facility. Olive Ave., just off of Hwy. 99, SH: 10am-4pm, T: 40-8', F: $40., A: $1. Cool Stuff Shows, 2330 W. Monte Vista, Visalia, CA 93277. PH: 559-307-4036.

Sep 25-26 CA, Fairfield. Comic Book, Sports Card & Beanie Show, Solano Mall. Travis Blvd., E. off I-80, SH: Sat. 10am-9pm, Sun. 11am-7pm, T: 80, F: $115.-$130. CA Sports Card Show, PH: 530-241-4063.

Sep 26 CA, Sacramento. Sac-Con Show, Scottish Rite Ctr. 6151 H St. (near CSUS), SH: 10am-4pm, T: 6' & 8', F: $50.-$60., A: $4. Dan Houck, 6278 Gloria Dr., Sacramento, CA 95831. PH: 916-395-1107 home or 444-2843 work.

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Sep 26 CT, East Hartford. Comic Book Convention, Elks Hall. 148 Robert St. (Exit 58 off of I-84), SH: 11am-5pm, T: 35, F: $45., A: $.99. The Bookie, Hal Kinney, 206 Burnside Ave., E. Hartford, CT 06108. PH: 860-289-1208.

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Sep 17-19 FL, Panama City. Comic Books, Sports Cards, NASCAR, Coins, Toys & Stamps Show, Mall. SH: mall hrs., T: 55, F: $125. Bases Loaded Promos., Inc., 295 Bryan Rd., McMinnville, TN 37110. PH: 931-939-3063 or 256-722-2738.

Sep 24-26 FL, Pensacola. Comic Books, Sports Cards, NASCAR, Coins, Toys & Stamps Show, Cordova Mall. SH: mall hrs., T: 55, F: $125. Bases Loaded Promos., Inc., 295 Bryan Rd., McMinnville, TN 37110. PH: 931-939-3063 or 256-722-2738.

Oct 1-3 FL, Tallahassee. Comic Books, Beanie Babies, BB Cards & Coll. Show, Mall. N. Monroe St., US 27, Exit 29, I-10, T: 45, A: free. Robert Chambliss, PO Box 37272, Tallahassee, FL 32315. PH: 904-442-6682.

ILLINOIS

Sep 11 IL, Orland Park. Comic Book, Sports, Toys, NASCAR & Beanies Show, Civic Ctr. La Grange Rd. (Rt. 45) at 147th St., SH: 9am-3pm, T: 85-6', F: $30., A: $1. John Leary, 9522 W. Shore Dr., Oak Lawn, IL 60453. PH: 708-423-1758.

Sep 19 IL, Bridgeview. Comic Book, Beanies & Sports Card Show, Oremus Ctr. 79th & Oketo (2 blks. W. of Harlem Ave.), SH: 9am-3pm, T: 65-8', F: $35., A: $2. John Leary, 9522 W. Shore Dr., Oak Lawn, IL 60453. PH: 708-423-1758.

Sep 26 IL, Orland Park. Comic Book, Sports, Toys, NASCAR & Beanies Show, Civic Ctr. La Grange Rd. (Rt. 45) at 147th St., SH: 9am-3pm, T: 85-6', F: $30., A: $1. John Leary, 9522 W. Shore Dr., Oak Lawn, IL 60453. PH: 708-423-1758.

Sep 26 IL, Oak Lawn. ToyCon Presents The Collectors Extravaganza, District Community Pavilion. 9401 S. Oak Park Ave., half mi. E. of I-294 & one half blk. N. of 95th St., SH: 9am-3pm, T: 100, A: $4., 10 & under free. Terry Mannix, PH: 708-671-9130.

INDIANA

Sep 4-5 IN, Warsaw. Comic Book & Collectible Hobby Show, Kosciusko Cty. Fairgrounds. South St. easy access from Ind. 15 or US 30, SH: Sat. 10am-6pm, Sun. 11am-5pm, T: 40, F: $55., A: free. Gene Haberstich, PO Box 908, Goshen, IN 46527. PH: 219-533-1887.

Sep 10-12 IN, Ft. Wayne. Comic Book & Collectible Hobby Show, Southtown Mall. US 27/33 South, SH: Fri. & Sat. 10am-9pm, Sun. 11am-5pm, T: 40, A: free.Gene Haberstich, PO Box 908, Goshen, IN 46527. PH: 219-533-1887.

Sep 17-18 IN, Merrillville. Comic Book & Collectible Hobby Show, Century Mall. US 30 at Broadway, SH: Sat. 10am-9pm, Sun. 11am-5pm, T: 60, F: $90., A: free. Gene Haberstich, PO Box 908, Goshen, IN 46527. PH: 219-533-1887.

Sep 19 IN, Indianapolis. Comic Book, Toy & Animation Show, Holiday Inn East. 21st & Shadeland (Shadeland Ave. Exit of I-70 or I-465), SH: 10am-4pm, T: 60, F: $70., A: $4., 9 & under free. Andy & Diane Holzman, 1947 Bechtel Rd., Indianapolis, IN 46260. PH: 317-334-0173 or 824-9602.

Sep 25-26 IN, Kokomo. Comic Book & Collectible Hobby Show, Mall. US 31 Bypass, SH: Sat. 10am-9pm, Sun. 11am-6pm, T: 60, F: $65., A: free. Gene Haberstich, PO Box 908, Goshen, IN 46526. PH: 219-533-1887.

LOUISIANA

Sep 11 LA, Metairie. Comic Book, Toy & Collectibles Show, Holiday Inn. Exit 228 Causeway, SH: 10am-5pm, T: 25-6'. Kevin Frazier, PH: 601-825-1699.

Sep 11-12 LA, Lake Charles. Comic Book, Beanies & Sports Card Show, Civic Ctr. I-10, Lakeshore Dr., SH: Sat. 10am-7pm, Sun. 10am-5pm, T: 25-8', F: $75., A: $1. David Widener, 14930 Walters Rd., Houston, TX 77068. PH: 281-586-9104 or 713-464-0308.

MARYLAND

Sep 16-19 MD, Bethesda. The Expo: SPX99, Holiday Inn. 8120 Wisconsin Ave., 3 blks. N. of the Bethesda Metro, SH: Fri. 3pm-8pm, Sat. 10:30am-7pm, T: 160, F: $100.-$160., A: $5. Mike Zarlenger, c/o Big Planet Comics, 426 Maple Ave. E., Vienna, VA 22180. PH: 703-242-9412.

Sep 19 MD, Pikesville. Comic Book, Toy & Non-Sports Card Show, Hilton. (Exit 20 off of 695), SH: 11am-4pm, T: 30-6', F: $60. for 1, $50. ea. add'l., A: $2. Bob Cook, 504 Heath Ave., Linthicum, MD 21090. PH: 410-789-4581.

MASSACHUSETTS

Sep 26 MA, South Attleboro. Comic Book, Toys, Non-Sports Card & Collectable Show, K of C Hall. Rt. 123, take Rt. 123 W., SH: 10am-3pm, T: 59, A: $3. Harry Martin, 936 South St., Wrentham, MA 02093. PH: 508-384-8791.

MICHIGAN

Sep 26 MI, Livonia. X-Trava Con Comic Book & Toy Show, Knights Of Columbus. 19801 Farmington Rd. (bet. 7 Mile & 8 Mile Rd.), SH: 10am-4pm, T: 55-8', F: $35. in advance, $40. day of show, A: $2. Motor City Conventions, Michael Goldman, 19785 W. 12 Mile Rd. Ste. 231, Southfield, MI 48076. PH: 248-426-8059.

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MINNESOTA

Sep 25-26 MN, Bloomington-Maplewood. MCBA FallCon Show, Thunderbird Hotel & Convention Ctr. 2201 E. 78th St., Bloomington, SH: 10am-5pm, T: 8', F: $195. MN Comic Book Assn., 5013 Grafton Ave. N., Oakdale,MN 55128. PH: 612-788-8191 or FAX: 651-228-3013.

MISSISSIPPI

Sep 12 MS, Jackson. Comic Book, Toy & Collectibles Show, Ramada Inn. 400 Greymont Ave., High St., Exit 96 B off I-55, SH: 10am-5pm, T: 26-6'. Kevin Frazier, PH: 601-825-1699.

NEBRASKA

Sep 19 NE, Omaha. Monthly Comic Books, Coins, Ballcards, NASCAR & Automobile Collectibles Show, Holiday Inn. Ford Hall, I-80 & 72nd St., T: 100, F: $30., A: free. Ed Bishop, 2016 E. 19th, Fremont, NE 68025. PH: 402-721-7364.

NEW JERSEY

Sep 5 NJ, Garfield. Comic Books, Sports Card & Collectibles Show, Boys Club. 490 Midland Ave., SH: 9:30am-3:30pm, T: 70, A: $1. Gary Sipos, 1 Garden Ct., N. Garfield, NJ 07026. PH: 973-340-2218 or 478-7662 day of show.

Sep 5 NJ, Wayne. Comic & Collectibles Show, Co. #1 Firemens Convention Ctr. 1 Parish Dr. off 23 N. at Lincoln Park Ext., SH: 9am-3pm, T: 100-6', F: $20., A: free. Phil DeMario, PO Box 4094, Wayne, NJ 07474. PH: 973-667-2112.

Sep 12 NJ, Elmwood Park. Comic Books, Sports Card & Collectibles Show, American Legion Post 147. 1 Legion Place (off Market St.), SH: 9:30am-3:30pm, T: 50-6', A: $1. Gary Sipos, 1 Garden Ct., N. Garfield, NJ 07026. PH: 973-340-2218 or 796-9717 day of show.

Sep 12 NJ, Hazlet. Comic Book, Sports Card & Collectible Show, Hazlet Hotel. 2870 Hwy. 35 (Pky. Exit 117 to Rt. 35 S. 2 mi.) (formerly Ramada), SH: 9:30am-3:30pm, T: 35-8', F: $50., A: $2. Collectors Showcase, Sandy Grecco, PO Box 189, Atlantic Highlands, NJ 07716. PH: 732-291-1632.

Sep 12 NJ, Clifton. Comic Book Expo, Community Recreation Ctr. 1232 Main Ave. (Rt. 46 to Piaget Ave. to Main Ave.), SH: 10am-4pm, T: 30-6', F: $45., A: free. J. Paul, 10 Cross St., Montclair, NJ 07042. PH: 973-783-0608.

Sep 19 NJ, Garfield. Comic Books, Sports Card & Collectibles Show, Boys Club. 490 Midland Ave., SH: 9:30am-3:30pm, T: 70, A: $1. Gary Sipos, 1 Garden Ct., N. Garfield, NJ 07026. PH: 973-340-2218 or 478-7662 day of show.

Sep 26 NJ, Clifton. Comic Books, Sports Card & Collectibles Show. 802 Clifton Ave. (entrance on Colfax Ave.), SH: 9:30am-3:30pm, T: 50-8', A: $1. Gary Sipos, 1 Garden Ct., N. Garfield, NJ 07026. PH: 973-340-2218 or 779-9332 day of show.

Sep 26 NJ, Bordentown. Comic Book, Toys & Sports Card Show, Armory. Rt. 206 off Exit 7 of NJ Tpke., SH: 9:30am-3:30pm, A: $2. EMCEE Conventions, PO Box 151, Hightstown, NJ 08520. PH: 609-448-7585.

Sep 26 NJ, Wayne. Comic Book Expo, Holiday Inn. Rt. 46 Service Rd. (off of Rt. 23 S. to Rt. 46 Service Rd.), SH: 10am-4pm, T: 30-8', F: $60., A: $2. / J. Paul, 10 Cross St., Montclair, NJ 07042. PH: 973-783-0608.

Oct 1-3 NJ, East Brunswick. Triple Play Comic Book, Sports Card, Memorabilia, Beanie Baby & Collectible Toy Show, Brunswick Square Mall. 755 Rt. 18, SH: mall hrs., T: 65-8', F: $185. for 1, $350. for 2, $490. for 3, A: free. F & B Sport Cards, Inc., Ferdinand Parascandolo, 482 Retford Ave., SI, NY 10306. PH: 718-667-9588 or 967-9172.

NEW MEXICO

Sep 12 NM, Albuquerque. Collector Con, Marriott Hotel. 2101 Louisiana Blvd. NE, SH: 9am-3pm, T: 48, F: $35., A: $1.50. Henry Segovia, 9617 Menaul Blvd. NE, Albuquerque, NM 87112. PH: 505-293-3065 day or 831-3253 eves.

NEW YORK

Sep 3 NY, Brooklyn. Fri. Comic Book, Baseball Cards, Beanie Babies, Toys & Collectibles Show, St. Dominics Church. 20th Ave. at Bayridge Pky. (same as 75th St.), SH: 6pm-10pm, T: 50-9', F: $40. for 1, $75. for 2, A: free. Sunrise Prods., Scotty O'Donnell, PO Box 340625 Ryder Stn., Brooklyn, NY 11234. PH: 718-251-2075 or 241-6477.

Sep 4 NY, Sayville-LI. Comic Book, Action Figures & Non-Sports Show, Attias Mart Indoor Flea Market. 5750 Sunrise Hwy. & Broadway, SH: 10am-4pm, T: 30, A: free. Paul, PH: 516-289-7398.

Sep 4-5 NY, Shirley. Comic Book, Card, Toy & Action Figure Beanie Show. 20 Floyd Rd., SH: 10am-4pm, F: $20. for 1 day, $30. for 2 days, A: free. Joe Fabianski, PH: 516-276-1871 or 281-9672 day of show.

Sep 5 NY, Massapequa-LI. Wizards Extravaganza, Elks Lodge. Veterans Blvd., behind Massapequa Railroad Station, T: 40. Wizard Collectibles, Valerie Becker, PH: 516-731-2509.

Sep 5 NY, Brooklyn. Sun. Comic Book, Baseball Cards, Beanie Babies, Toys & Collectibles Show, Temple Hillel of Flatlands. 2164 Ralph Ave. (at Ave L). SH: 10am-5pm, T: 50-8', F: $40. for 1, $75. for 2, A: free. Sunrise Prods., Scotty O'Donnell, PO Box 340625 Ryder Stn., Brooklyn, NY 11234. PH: 718-251-2075 or 241-6477.

Sep 10-11 NY, Manhattan. Big Apple Comic Book & Toy Convention, St. Paul Church. 9th Ave. 60th St., SH: Fri. 12noon-8pm, Sat. 10am-6pm, T: 115, A: $6. Mike or Chris, 74-05 Metropolitan Ave., Middle Village, NY 11379. PH: 718-326-2713.

Sep 11-12 NY, Shirley. Comic Book, Card, Toy & Action Figure Beanie Show. 20 Floyd Rd., SH: 10am-4pm, F: $20. for 1 day, $30. for 2 days, A: free. Joe Fabianski, PH: 516-276-1871 or 281-9672 day of show.

Sep 12 NY, Brooklyn. Comic Book, Sports Card & Beanie Babies Show, Golden Gate Inn. Knapp St. & Shore Pky., SH: 9am-4pm, T: 35-8', F: $45., A: free. Mark Dillon, PH: 718-266-1625.

Sep 17 NY, Brooklyn. Fri. Comic Book, Baseball Cards, Beanie Babies, Toys & Collectibles Show, St. Dominics Church. 20th Ave. at Bayridge Pky. (same as 75th St.), SH: 6pm-10pm, T: 50-9', F: $40. for 1, $75. for 2, A: free. Sunrise Prods., Scotty O'Donnell, PO Box 340625 Ryder Stn., Brooklyn, NY 11234. PH: 718-251-2075 or 241-6477.

Sep 18 NY, Sayville-LI. Comic Book, Action Figures & Non-Sports Show, Attias Mart Indoor Flea Market. 5750 Sunrise Hwy. & Broadway, SH: 10am-4pm, T: 30, A: free. Paul, PH: 516-289-7398.

Sep 18-19 NY, Shirley. Comic Book, Card, Toy & Action Figure Beanie Show. 20 Floyd Rd., SH: 10am-4pm, F: $20. for 1 day, $30. for 2 days, A: free. Joe Fabianski, PH: 516-276-1871 or 281-9672 day of show.

Sep 19 NY, Ozone Park. Comic Book, Sports Card, Coin & Beanie Baby Show & AUCTION, Jewish Ctr. 107-01 Crossbay Blvd., SH: 10am-4pm, T: 36, F: $37.50 for 1, $65. for 2, A: $1. Joseph Carvana, 114-32 150 Ave., S. Ozone Park, NY 11420. PH: 718-845-7240 or 848-1795.

Sep 25-26 NY, Shirley. Comic Book, Card, Toy & Action Figure Beanie Show. 20 Floyd Rd., SH: 10am-4pm, F: $20. for 1 day, $30. for 2 days, A: free. Joe Fabianski, PH: 516-276-1871 or 281-9672 day of show.

Sep 26 NY, Buffalo. Queen City Comic Con '99, Marriott Hotel. Exit 50 off of Rt. 90 to Rt. 290 Exit 5B, SH: 10am-5pm, T: 84-8', F: $155. in advance before Jun 15, $175. thereafter, A: $4.50, under 5 free. Chautauqua Comics, PH: 716-484-9631.

NORTH CAROLINA

Sep 11-12 NC, Raleigh. 32nd North State Toy & Hobby Show, State Fairgrounds. 1025 Blueridge Rd., SH: Sat. 9am-5pm, Sun. 10am-4:30pm, T: sold out, A: $4. Carolina Hobby Expo, PH: 704-786-8373.

OHIO

Sep 19 OH, Youngstown-Warren. Comic Con, Holiday Inn-Metroplex. I-80 & Rt. 193 (Exit 229), SH: 10am-4pm, T: 28-8', F: $50., A: $2., 6 & under free. Jeff Harper, 5220 Loma Linda NE, Canton, OH 44714. PH: 330-499-6056.

Sep 26 OH, Cleveland. Comic Con, Knights Party Center, K of C Hall, Wickliffe. 29101 Euclid Ave. (.5 mi. E. of I-90, Exit 186), SH: 10am-4pm, T: 30-8', F: $50., A: $2., 6 & under free. Jeff Harper, 5220 Loma Linda NE, Canton, OH 44714. PH: 330-499-6056.

PENNSYLVANIA

Sep 24-26 PA, Fort Washington. 68th Philadelphia Comic Book, Sports Card & Sports Memorabilia Show, Expo Center. 1100 Virginia Dr. (PA Tpke. Exit 26), SH: Fri. 5pm-9pm, Sat. 9am-5pm, Sun. 9am-4pm. EPSCC, Inc., Bob Schmierer, PO Box 3037, Maple Glen, PA 19002. PH: 215-643-0910 or FAX: 215-643-2697.

TENNESSEE

Sep 2-5 TN, Nashville. Comic Books, Sports Cards, NASCAR, Coins, Toys & Stamps Show, Cool Springs Galleria. SH: mall hrs., T: 65, F: $135. Bases Loaded Promos., Inc., 295 Bryan Rd., McMinnville, TN 37110. PH: 931-939-3063 or 256-722-2738.

Sep 11-12 TN, Morristown. Comic Book, Sports Card & NASCAR Show, College Square Mall. 2550 E. Morris Blvd., SH: Sat. 10am-9pm, Sun. 12noon-6pm, T: 50, F: $75., A: free. Bill Henderson, 346 Fuller Estate Cir., Morristown, TN 37813. PH: 423-581-8386.

Sep 12 TN, Knoxville. Comic Book Show, Holiday Inn. Cedar Bluff Exit 378 off I-40, SH: 10am-4pm, T: 30, A: $2. Comic City, 4110 Gallatin Rd., Nashville, TN 37216. PH: 877-262-0908.

Sep 19 TN, Nashville. Comic Book Show, Days Inn Airport. Briley Pky., SH: 9am-4pm, T: 50, A: $2. Comic City, 4110 Gallatin Rd., Nashville, TN 37216. PH: 877-262-0908.

TEXAS

Sep 11-12 TX, Austin. Collectors Expo, Palmer Auditorium, (lower level). South First & Riverside, SH: Sat. 9am-6pm, Sun. 10am-4pm, T: 200, F: $80., A: $3. good for 2 days, under 12 free with adult. Sally Wallace, 6702 Lexington Rd., Austin, TX 78757. PH: 512-454-9882.

Sep 25-26 TX, Houston. Comic Books, Sports Card & Memorabilia Show, Holiday Inn. 7787 Katy Fwy., I-10 W. at Antoine Exit, SH: 10am-4pm, T: 50, A: $3., 12 & under free. Nostalgia Promotions, Andy Mingle, PH: 281-748-5154.

Sep 25-26 TX, Port Arthur. Comic Book, Beanies & Sports Card Show, Central Mall. Hwy. 365 at Hwy. 69, SH: Sat. 10am-9pm, Sun. 12noon-5pm, T: 35-6', F: $75. for 2, A: free. David Widener, 14930 Walters Rd., Houston, TX 77068. PH: 281-586-9104 or 713-464-0308.

VIRGINIA

Sep 5 VA, Tysons Corner-McLean. Monthly Comic Book, Magic, Toy & Trading Card Show, Tysons Corner Westpark Hotel. 8401 Westpark Dr., take Exit 10 (Rt. 7 W.) off I-495 (Washington, DC area), SH: 10am-4pm, T: 90-6', F: $65. for 1st, $60. for 2nd, $55. ea. add'l., A: $2., under 5 free. Capital Associates, Inc., Jeffrey Rocen, 7952 Arden Ct., Vienna, VA 22027. PH: 703-912-1993.

Sep 25-26 VA, Richmond. Comic Books, Sports Card, NASCAR & Collectible Toys Show, Show Place Annex. 3002 Mechanicsville Tpke., T: 100-8', F: $110., A: $2., under 9 free. D&S Collectibles, Don or Sheila Hall, 1220 Myrtle Ave., Chesapeake, VA 23325. PH: 757-361-9480 or 494-5739.

WASHINGTON

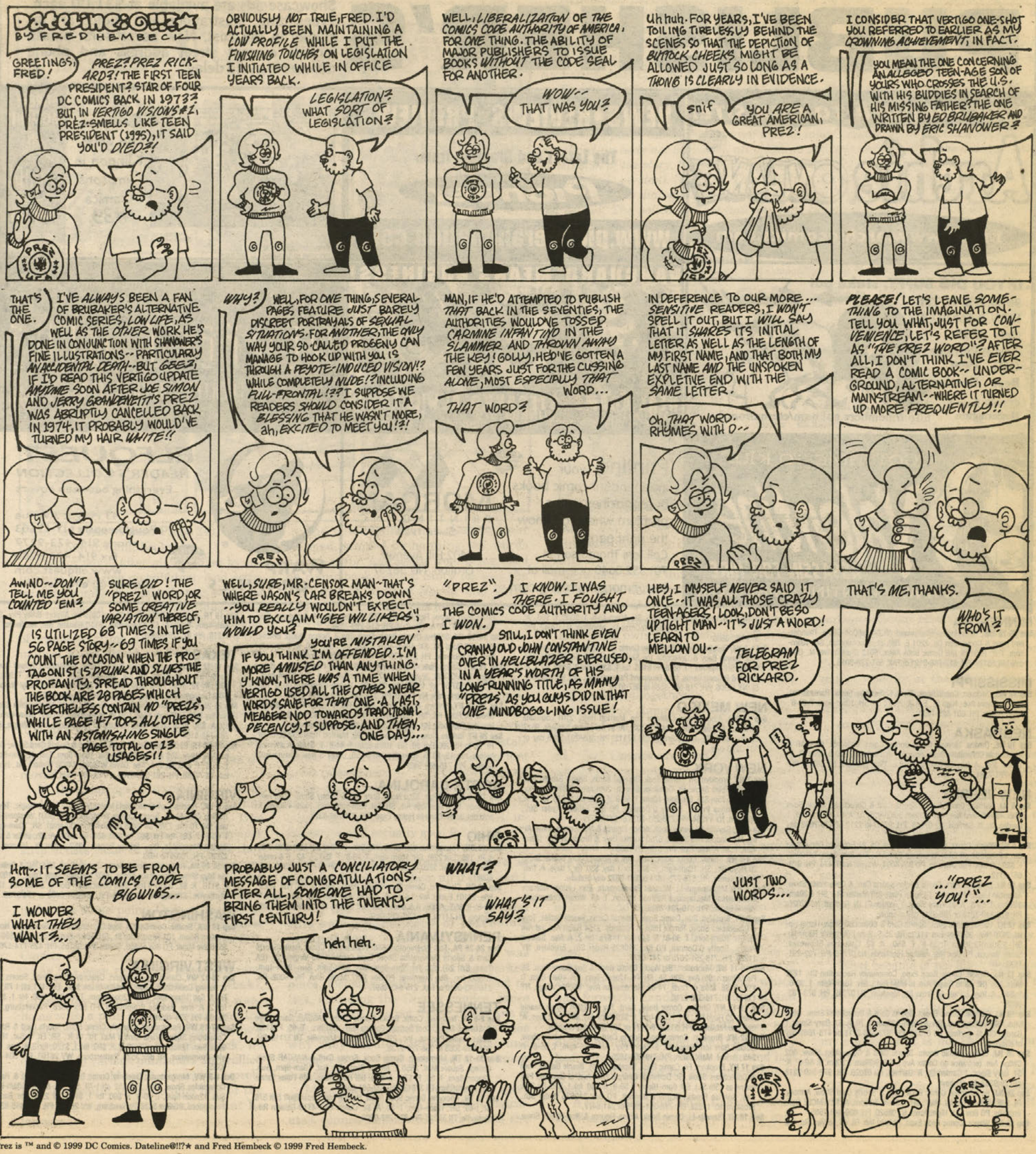
Sep 19 WA, Seattle. Com-Card & Toys Convention #32, Seattle Ctr. Northwestern Room. 101 Republican St., SH: 10am-5pm, T: 85-8', F: $80., A: $5. Steve Miner, PO Box 55853, Seattle, WA 98155. PH: 425-774-1781.

WEST VIRGINIA

Sep 10-12 WV, Clarksburg-Bridgeport. Celebrity Comic Book, Sports Card & Racing Collectibles Show, Meadowbrook Mall. Exit 121 off I-79, SH: Fri. & Sat. 10am-9pm, Sun. 12noon-6pm, T: 40-8', F: $90. for 1, $170. for 2, A: free. Badgley Promotions, PO Box 3528, Parkersburg, WV 26103. PH: 304-485-8345.

Sep 17-19 WV, Parkersburg. Celebrity Comic Book, Sports Card & Racing Collectibles Show, Grand Central Mall. Rt. 14 N., SH: Fri. & Sat. 10am-9pm, Sun. 12noon-6pm, T: 50-8', F: $90. for 1, $170. for 2, A: free. Badgley Promotions, PO Box 3528, Parkersburg, WV 26103. PH: 304-485-8345.

Oct 1-3 WV, Morgantown. Celebrity Comic Book, Sports Card & Racing Collectibles Show, Mall. Exit 152 off I-79, SH: Fri. & Sat. 10am-9pm, Sun. 12noon-6pm, T: 40-8', F: $90. for 1, $170. for 2, A: free. Badgley Promotions, PO Box 3528, Parkersburg, WV 26103. PH: 304-485-8345.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GREETINGS, FRED!
PREZ? PREZ RICKARD? THE FIRST TEEN PRESIDENT? STAR OF FOUR DC COMICS BACK IN 1973? BUT, IN VERTIGO VISIONS #1, PREZ: SMELLS LIKE TEEN PRESIDENT (1995), IT SAID YOU'D DIED?!
OBVIOUSLY NOT TRUE, FRED. I'D ACTUALLY BEEN MAINTAINING A LOW PROFILE WHILE I PUT THE FINISHING TOUCHES ON LEGISLATION I INITIATED WHILE IN OFFICE YEARS BACK.
LEGISLATION? WHAT SORT OF LEGISLATION?
WELL, LIBERALIZATION OF THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY OF AMERICA, FOR ONE THING. THE ABILITY OF MAJOR PUBLISHERS TO ISSUE BOOKS WITHOUT THE CODE SEAL FOR ANOTHER.
WOW-- THAT WAS YOU?
Uh huh. FOR YEARS, I'VE BEEN TOILING TIRELESSLY BEHIND THE SCENES SO THAT THE DEPICTION OF BUTTOCK CHEEKS MIGHT BE ALLOWED JUST SO LONG AS A THONG IS CLEARLY IN EVIDENCE.
snif
YOU ARE A GREAT AMERICAN, PREZ!
I CONSIDER THAT VERTIGO ONE-SHOT YOU REFERRED TO EARLIER AS MY CROWNING ACHIEVEMENT, IN FACT.
YOU MEAN THE ONE CONCERNING AN ALLEGED TEEN-AGE SON OF YOURS WHO CROSSES THE U.S. WITH HIS BUDDIES IN SEARCH OF HIS MISSING FATHER? THE ONE WRITTEN BY ED BRUBAKER AND DRAWN BY ERIC SHANOWER?
THAT'S THE ONE.
I'VE ALWAYS BEEN A FAN OF BRUBAKER'S ALTERNATIVE COMIC SERIES, LOW LIFE, AS WELL AS THE OTHER WORK HE'S DONE IN CONJUNCTION WITH SHANOWER'S FINE ILLUSTRATIONS -- PARTICULARLY AN ACCIDENTAL DEATH -- BUT GEEZ, IF I'D READ THIS VERTIGO UPDATE ANYTIME SOON AFTER JOE SIMON AND JERRY GRANDENETTI'S PREZ WAS ABRUPTLY CANCELLED BACK IN 1974, IT PROBABLY WOULD'VE TURNED MY HAIR WHITE!!
WHY?
WELL, FOR ONE THING, SEVERAL PAGES FEATURE JUST BARELY DISCREET PORTRAYALS OF SEXUAL SITUATIONS. FOR ANOTHER, THE ONLY WAY YOUR SO-CALLED PROGENY CAN MANAGE TO HOOK UP WITH YOU IS THROUGH A PEYOTE-INDUCED VISION!? WHILE COMPLETELY NUDE!? INCLUDING FULL-FRONTAL!?? I SUPPOSE WE READERS SHOULD CONSIDER IT A BLESSING THAT HE WASN'T MORE, ah, EXCITED TO MEET YOU!?!
MAN, IF HE'D ATTEMPTED TO PUBLISH THAT BACK IN THE SEVENTIES, THE AUTHORITIES WOULDVE TOSSED CARMINE INFANTINO IN THE SLAMMER AND THROWN AWAY THE KEY! GOLLY, HED'VE GOTTEN A FEW YEARS JUST FOR THE CUSSING ALONE, MOST ESPECIALLY THAT WORD...
THAT WORD?
IN DEFERENCE TO OUR MORE... SENSITIVE READERS, I WON'T SPELL IT OUT, BUT I WILL SAY THAT IT SHARES ITS INITIAL LETTER AS WELL AS THE LENGTH OF MY FIRST NAME, AND THAT BOTH MY LAST NAME AND THE UNSPOKEN EXPLETIVE END WITH THE SAME LETTER.
Oh, THAT WORD. RHYMES WITH O--
PLEASE! LET'S LEAVE SOMETHING TO THE IMAGINATION. TELL YOU WHAT, JUST FOR CONVENIENCE, LET'S REFER TO IT AS "THE PREZ WORD"? AFTER ALL, I DON'T THINK I'VE EVER READ A COMIC BOOK -- UNDERGROUND, ALTERNATIVE, OR MAINSTREAM -- WHERE IT TURNED UP MORE FREQUENTLY!!
Aw, NO -- DON'T TELL ME YOU COUNTED 'EM?
SURE DID! THE "PREZ" WORD, OR SOME CREATIVE VARIATION THEREOF, IS UTILIZED 68 TIMES IN THE 56 PAGE STORY -- 69 TIMES IF YOU COUNT THE OCCASION WHEN THE PROTAGONIST IS DRUNK AND SLURS THE PROFANITY. SPREAD THROUGHOUT THE BOOK ARE 28 PAGES WHICH NEVERTHELESS CONTAIN NO "PREZS", WHILE PAGE 47 TOPS ALL OTHERS WITH AN ASTONISHING SINGLE PAGE TOTAL OF 13 USAGES!!
WELL, SURE, MR. CENSOR MAN -- THAT'S WHERE JASON'S CAR BREAKS DOWN -- YOU REALLY WOULDN'T EXPECT HIM TO EXCLAIM "GEE WILLIKERS", WOULD YOU?
you're MISTAKEN IF YOU THINK I'M OFFENDED. I'M MORE AMUSED THAN ANYTHING. y'KNOW, THERE WAS A TIME WHEN VERTIGO USED ALL THE OTHER SWEAR WORDS SAVE FOR THAT ONE. A LAST, MEAGER NOD TOWARDS TRADITIONAL DECENCY, I SUPPOSE. AND THEN, ONE DAY...
"PREZ".
I KNOW. I WAS THERE. I FOUGHT THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY AND I WON.
STILL, I DON'T THINK EVEN CRANKY OLD JOHN CONSTANTINE OVER IN HELLBLAZER EVER USED, IN A YEAR'S WORTH OF HIS LONG-RUNNING TITLE, AS MANY "PREZS" AS YOU GUYS DID IN THAT ONE MINDBOGGLING ISSUE!
HEY, I MYSELF NEVER SAID IT ONCE -- IT WAS ALL THOSE CRAZY TEENAGERS! LOOK, DON'T BE SO UPTIGHT MAN -- IT'S JUST A WORD! LEARN TO MELLON OU--
TELEGRAM FOR PREZ RICKARD.
THAT'S ME, THANKS.
WHO'S IT FROM?
Hm -- IT SEEMS TO BE FROM SOME OF THE COMICS CODE BIGWIGS..
I WONDER WHAT THEY WANT?..
PROBABLY JUST A CONCILIATORY MESSAGE OF CONGRATULATIONS. AFTER ALL, SOMEONE HAD TO BRING THEM INTO THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY!
heh heh.
WHAT?
WHAT'S IT SAY?
JUST TWO WORDS...
..."PREZ YOU!"...

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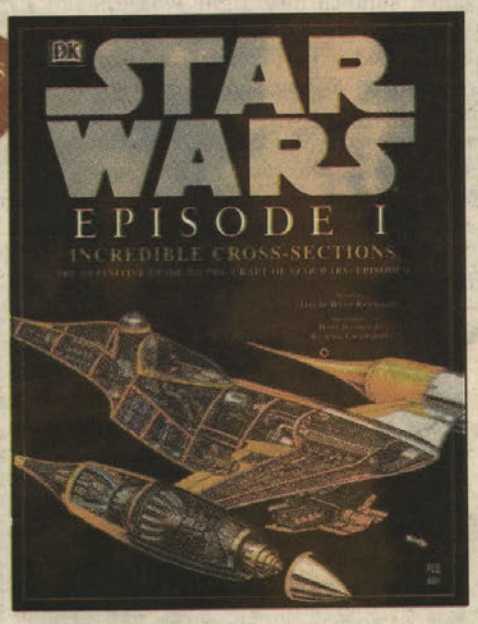

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CHANGES

Jim Steranko's brushes with the boundaries

A creator's checklist of changes made by the Code... or editors mindful of it

By Jim Steranko

Throughout my comics career, I was acutely aware of the audience and, at Marvel in particular, attempted to maintain a level of decorum, taking a discreet approach that could easily qualify as self-censorship. Additionally, I tried to invest a quality of dignity in all my figures, heroes and villains alike, that I hoped would help the material transcend the comic-book formula and its two-dimensional characters. Nevertheless, I still got the Code in an uproar, mostly in regard to psycho-sexual elements and themes.

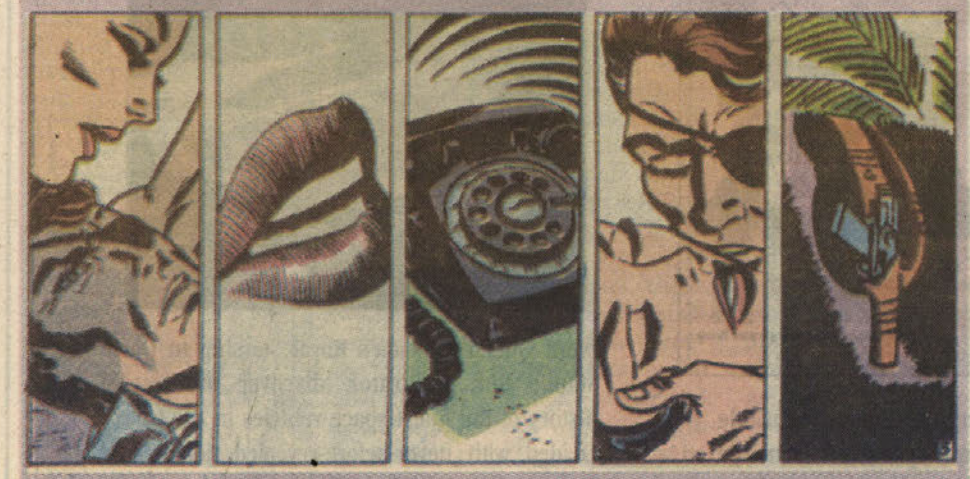
I was tired of comics' sexless women and tried to bring that tension to my characterizations whenever it was appropriate. Some women reek of sex appeal, but, after the Code's inception, four-color females were as sterile as spayed cats, simply androgynous figures in drag. In subtle ways (with body language, attitude, dialogue, facial expressions, and visual metaphors), I attempted to invest sexuality into my stories. (It may have been on my mind at the time because I was playing in a band five nights a week and meeting some very remarkable ladies.)

My comic women, however, weren't double-D pin-up dolls or porno queens, just humans with active libidos — often expressed between the panels and, in most cases, deliberately understated. Of course, I did put Nick Fury in a black leather zip suit, but no one seemed to get it — except the comics' female readers. I know because they actually wrote letters about it!

Some examples of censorship in my work:

S.H.I.E.L.D #2

The notorious silent romance page: In addition to eliminating the modest cleavage line from Val's bust in panel 1, the Code decided something vulgar was implied in panel 9. I drew the phone off the hook; they insisted it be put back on! And the last panel was a long shot from overhead, showing Fury and Val embracing while kneeling on the floor — leaving the evening's outcome to the reader's imagination. Instead, the Code censored the shot. Editor Thomas suggested replacing it with a detail from panel 1, which showed a gun thrust in a holster — an unintentional, but spectacular, metaphor for sexual congress. (The scene, incidentally, was really my apartment, my furniture — and my phone!)



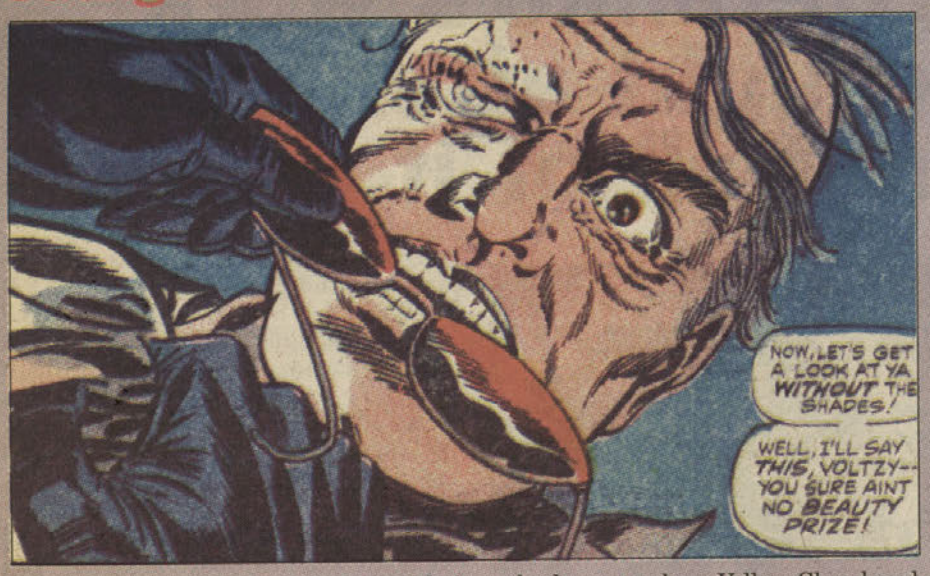
Hulk Annual #1

The original had the character's face dripping with sweat and showing veins popping at the temples. Those two elements, plus his ferocious expression, was more than Marvel could handle at the time. Marie Severin replaced it with a typical, teddy-bear head.

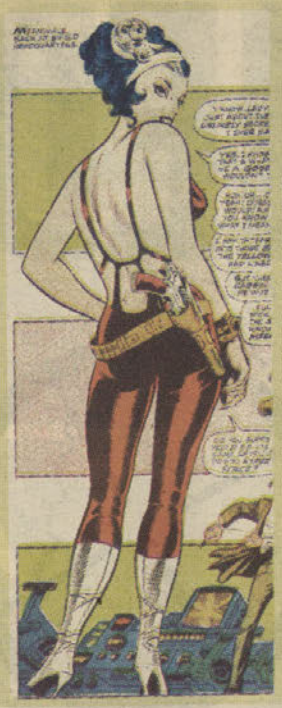
Tower of Shadows #1

Beating the Code to the punch, Publisher Martin Goodman turned thumbs down on the cover I generated for the first issue as being "too horrific, too different." It was replaced with a John Romita variation.

Strange Tales #165



Apparently anticipating Code trouble in a shock scene where Yellow Claw henchman Voltzman has his sunglasses ripped off to reveal his mutilated face, Editor Roy Thomas mitigated the impact by changing my straight, serious dialogue to a joke line.



Strange Tales #168

"The Day the Earth Died" — I did a full-page pin-up of Val, from the back, which showed her very shapely form. This image was rivetingly sexual because she had a backless dress, and her pose was on one hip, with her looking over her shoulder rather seductively. I was intentionally going for a specific look with this drawing, and I thought I gave her a very shapely but very tasteful form, which was highlighted by the shine of this leather outfit she had on. But either the Code censors or Roy Thomas felt that the picture was too explicit for readers and ordered Marvel to black it out. So they blacked it out entirely — a complete removal of the detail I wanted to include.

Captain America #113

My original cover (showing Cap's cowl over a skull and riddled with bulletholes) was aborted by Stan Lee as being "too grim." (It was recently published in Vanguard's *Steranko: Graphic Prince of Darkness*.) While both Marvel and the Code bit the bullet when the artist put the fatale back in femme fatale by garbing Madame Hydra in a black vinyl catsuit, they refused to allow her a whip (#111-112) and replaced it with a loop of rope.

MOMENTS LATER...IN A HIDDEN TORCH-LIT CHAMBER, WE FIND...
BRING FORTH THE ONE WHO FAILED!
HAIL, HYDRA! IMMORTAL HYDRA!
WE SHALL NEVER BE DESTROYED!
CUT OFF A LIMB, AND TWO MORE SHALL TAKE ITS PLACE!
BRING FORTH THE ONE WHO ALLOWED CAPTAIN AMERICA TO ESCAPE THE WRATH OF MADAME HYDRA!
WE SERVE NONE BUT THE MASTER...
BRING HIM FORTH THAT HE TOO MAY DIE!
AS THE WORLD SHALL SOON SERVE US!
THE FATE WHICH I PROMISE TO ALL WHO DARE TO POSE OUR GLORIOUS MASTER PLAN!
MERCY, HYDRA! MERCY! I--I--I TRIED!

Superman #400

Artists inevitably chip away at outdated taboos. In this story, I aspired to tell the last Man of Steel tale that could be told — and took another chip out of the stone tablet of CCA rules. The narrative's final panel featured a naked woman — shadowed so tastefully that even the Code accepted it as a work of art.

Sex and violence are integral to drama, the stuff that universal myths are made of, from Shakespeare to Spielberg. How they're handled often makes the difference between a masterpiece and a mortification. The trick is recognizing the difference — or caring about it. And, if we don't, some censor will do it for us. — **Jim Steranko**

Red Tide rolls back in from Dark Horse

"I've got 72 hours to live, Chandler. I want you to find my murderer."

With that request, Chandler, Jim Steranko's hard-boiled private detective, begins his latest case in *Red Tide*, a graphic novel scheduled to ship in December from Dark Horse. The case takes Chandler into New York's underworld, where he attempts to stop a hitman from killing the witnesses to a gangland hit. In the course of his investigation, Chandler discovers that his own shadowy past is connected to the murders.

The Dark Horse publication described by Steranko as "the director's uncensored cut," is actually a rewritten, and redrawn version of the story originally published in 1976. New Steranko art has been created for the 144-page graphic novel which retails for $14.95.

"I bypassed the rigors of the Comics Code by creating the hardboiled detective graphic novel outside of its jurisdiction, for the mass-market paperback audience as well as comics readers."

WATCHED

Steranko's work caught attention — not all of it wanted

By Gary St. Lawrence

Jim Steranko, the comic-book industry's knight of *noir* has had a bone to pick with the Comics Code Authority since the mid-1960s over a series of editorial changes he said he feels were both unnecessary and injurious to his artwork.

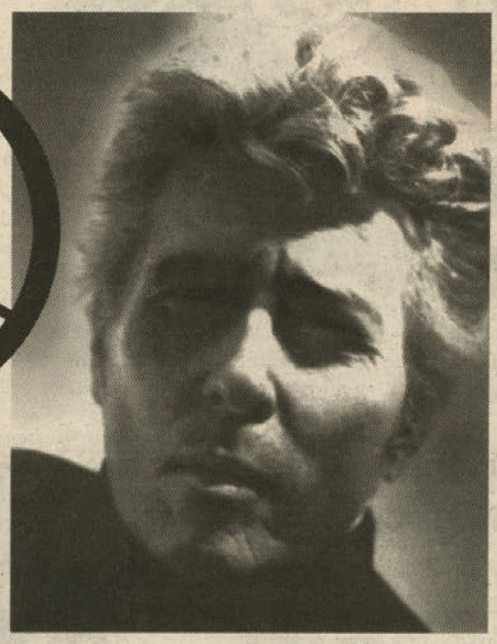
"I remember one incident in particular when Marvel called and told me that they'd edited an illustration I'd done of Madame Hydra in which she was carrying a bullwhip," Steranko said. "Here was this clearly sensuous woman, in a classic dominatrix outfit in skin-tight leather, stiletto heels, and a page-boy haircut. But somehow Marvel felt that a *bullwhip* was too suggestive? I could never figure that out. So Marvel called and told me that they'd changed the whip to a rope. Suffice to say, I wasn't happy. They said there was nothing they could do, and they squelched my protests, claiming it was simply a Comics Code matter."

Steranko has a list of examples of similar incidents during his days at Marvel, as well as DC, in which arbitrary editing — sometimes complete remastering of his work — was done without his knowledge or consent. The question Steranko has always asked, and said he has never had answered, was whether these changes were made as a result of Comics Code Authority directives, or by Marvel editors who were in fear of what the Code *might* have said about them.

"What bothered me about it was that I always found out about the changes three months after the comics were already published," he said. "It wasn't Marvel policy to call artists and tell them about changes. I have no recollection at any time, ever, of other artists at Marvel telling me they were in the same boat, that they didn't like the changes, and that they wanted to challenge them. I'm sure there were plenty of artists being upset by this, but it was never openly discussed."

Steranko, the self-editor. Steranko said he prides himself on his ability to self-edit and believes he has always had a keen awareness of the size and demographics of his audience. He said much of the censoring done by the Code over the years has been the result of a fear of prurience by the Code and Marvel, regardless of whether such prurience was actually in the work being censored. "I think that all of my work is extremely tasteful and I don't think I was ever out of line with any of the controversial elements that I inserted into those comics," Steranko said. "Remember that we were using prime-time television as content barometer. All the elements that Marvel had such abject fear of was being shown on television every night to largely the same audience we were reaching in the comic books."

"I always found out about the changes months after the comics were published."
— Jim Steranko



Steranko scoffed at the argument that his censored work on such titles as *Nick Fury: Agent of S.H.I.E.L.D.*, *The X-Men*, *Strange Tales*, *The Incredible Hulk*, and *Captain America* would have had negative impact on the young children reading those titles.

"I don't think that Nick Fury was ever aimed at 8-9-year-old kids," he said. "I drew it for kids in their mid-teens, and I catered to Marvel's college-age audience. Nick Fury was Marvel's version of James Bond. So I thought it only reasonable to suggest that any elements that appeared in the Bond films could appear in the Marvel comics. And I never would have gotten away with a female character named Pussy Galore in a Marvel comic book back then — which I wouldn't have tried to do, anyway."

Steranko found Nick Fury to be unbelievable when he joined the series. The concept of a rough-mannered, uneducated, semi-literate, foxhole soldier who's suddenly running America's premier security operation made no sense to Steranko.

"Fury needed to be cleaned up, so that's what I did. But, instead of trying to learn the character from scratch, I took a shortcut and simply made him me. But he was still surrounded by this very adult-oriented life — and very adult-oriented situations. The one unshakable principle I've always kept about adult-oriented work is that it's imperative that adult material must be handled in an adult manner.

"Besides trying to make a personal statement, I've always tried to invest elements into my work that make it fresh and new and interesting. And, frankly, I find psychosexual elements to be interesting. I didn't do these pieces in a titillating manner. I didn't do huge-breasted women with nipples poking out, *etc.* Marvel never would have put up with it, and I wouldn't have attempted it. In fact, every time I drew a woman with a scoop-necked outfit, they took out the cleavage line, anyway. So I wanted to know how these so-called infractions on my part were being judged."

Steranko added that he believes sexual obsessions are powerful and that people are driven by these motivations. So he naturally questioned why Marvel and others would find it unreasonable to ignore such ideas completely, especially when they were *suggested* in his comics, and not gratuitously or excessively prominent in his art.

"Sex and violence are integral to drama, the stuff that universal myths are made of, from Shakespeare to Spielberg," he said. "How they're handled often makes the difference between a masterpiece and a mortification. The trick is recognizing the difference or caring about it. And, if we don't, some censor will do it for us. I approach every piece of art with what I call the 'philosophy of the figure.' Much of the art you see today is done for shock value. It's done in grotesque disproportions, with tiny heads, foreshortened legs, huge breasts, and even bigger guns. That kind of work has lost its artistic and mystical qualities; it's lost any sense of philosophical meaning. I constantly edit myself to avoid that kind of image. Art is beauty, that much I know for certain. So when I do a piece of art, I'm not trying for Madonna; I'm trying for *the* Madonna."

Steranko on the Code. Steranko said the Comics Code Authority was formed as a backlash against excessively violent and suggestive comics from the 1950s.

He said the Code, even at its inception, was repressed with an obsolete 1950s mentality that simply wasn't able, or willing, to accept the progressiveness of the 1960s and 1970s.

Although he conceded that the Code is far more liberal and accepting today, he added that he believes the Code began with a misconception of purpose and a poor approach to the execution of that purpose.

"I think the Code is much too liberal now, and, were I doing comics today, I surely wouldn't bump into the Code like I did years ago," Steranko said. "My own self-censorship is much more rigid than the Code is today in terms of sex and violence.

"I think every artist in the comic-book business needs to address that aspect for a very young audience. It's a matter of responsibility, and, whether the Code will let you get away with it or not, you have to establish a measure of responsibility and never violate that measure, because of the effect it has on so many young lives."

Steranko had similar advice for the Code itself. "I think the Code needs to be addressed and revised on a regular basis," he said. "But the difficulty is: Who's going to do it? The sensibilities of 'sophisticated' New Yorkers are different from those in the middle of Idaho. So how do we reach a middle ground? I don't know if this is really possible. So what I would do is fall back on our own sensibilities.

"I'd like to see comics open doorways to higher drama, the development of more compelling characters, and more intense situations — without blatantly exploiting bad taste. There's been enough of that. There's been too much of that."

With his ever-calm intensity, Steranko smiled, looked away thoughtfully, and concluded, "Comics need some subtlety, if they're ever going to grow up."

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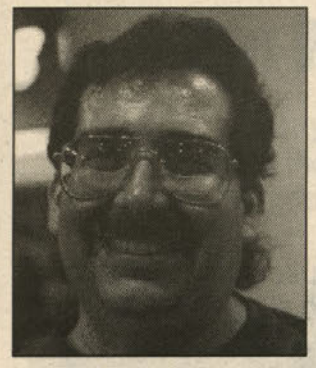
The Comics Magazine Association of America was formed in 1954 by a group of publishers committed to the principle that the public deserved wholesome and decent entertainment for children. To that end, those publishers set content guidelines, created a reviewing authority, and established the Comics Code Seal. This seal was to appear on covers of the CMAA member comics as a way of communicating to the public their shared commitment to these standards.

While the comic book industry has changed over the intervening three decades, as has almost every other facet of American life, the publisher members of the CMAA remain committed to providing decent and wholesome comic books for children. This new updated version of the Comics Code is a reaffirmation of that commitment.

The member publishers of the Comics Magazine Association of America hereby reaffirm our joint commitment to our shared principle: that comics carrying the Comics Code Seal be ones that a parent can purchase with confidence that the contents uphold basic American moral and culture values.

— Preamble to the Comics Magazine Association of America Comics Code, 1989



"I won't say that no one in the office spotted the alteration, but, if they did, they kept quiet about it."

There are those of us in the comics industry who will look at the opening sentence and deem it a lie. The comics industry was running scared in 1954, and that's why it adopted the Comics Code. To be sure, there were publishers who were, indeed, committed to the stated principle. One of them, Dell Comics, didn't use the Comics Code seal because it said it felt its own standards were far higher than those adopted by fellow publishers. I don't believe it's coincidence that some of the comics titles put out of business with the creation of the Code were also some of the best-selling comic books of the era. Amazing how, while lying on their backs with paws raised in submission to the moralists of the day, publishers could still stick a knife in the back of their competition.

I make no apologies for looking at the adoption of the Comics Code as a disgraceful chapter in comics history or at the Comics Magazine Association of America itself as a useless dinosaur too stupid to know it should be extinct. Which is not to say I don't see the need for the industry to guide parents toward selecting appropriate comics for their children or for an organization that will honestly promote the diverse interests of the comics art form. I'll get back to that.

As a comics reader, I can't say the Comics Code seal affected my passion for comics one way or another. It was always there and I took it for granted. The first "non-Code" comic books I bought were early issues of *Creepy* and *Eerie*, and, looking over some of those stories, I haven't come across any that I would object to my 11-year-old son reading.

As a comics professional, I managed to sail through a number of years as a Marvel Comics editor and staffer without ever, to the best of my recollection, having a run-in with the Code.

I had my own ethical and moral standards, and they never seemed at odds with whoever was reviewing my work at the Code office. In fact, I can only name four times when I was involved in stories which resulted in anyone's raising a question about their content — and a single time when I helped fellow creators pull a prank on the Code.

Case the first: I wrote a framing sequence to go around reprints in *Giant-Size Defenders* #1 (Jul 74). Jim Starlin drew Clea, Doctor Strange's apprentice and girlfriend, in a costume so tight there was definite "nippleage" under it. I wasn't sure that would pass Code muster and mentioned it to Jim. He got pretty angry and I backed off. I figured I'd let the Code decide the issue, because a) I liked the way Jim had drawn Clea, and b) that was supposed to be the CMAA's job. Clea's costuming was approved and, as far as I know, never corrupted a single minor. Of course, given Marvel's monumentally bad printing back then, the readers never got to enjoy Jim's art as much as I had.

Case the second: Roy Thomas and Barry Smith did an adaptation of "Red Nails," a classic Conan story by Robert E. Howard, for the revival of *Savage Tales*. Smith drew erotic hieroglyphics in some backgrounds. Chuckling all the way — as I recall — Roy had Marvel's production department remove some of the naughtier bits, predating Lorena Bobbitt by several years.

Case the third: I wrote *Ghost Rider* (the first series with the motorcycle-riding Johnny Blaze) for something like two years during my years at Marvel. Because it was a fairly low-priority series, I was pretty much given free rein with it during the editorships of Roy Thomas, Len Wein, and Marv Wolfman. I only had one "argument" with any of them over any of my scripts and that "argument" came after the offending script had been approved by the Comics Code and published. The "argument" was based solely on my use of one word in the script.

Here's where it gets tricky. Maggie Thompson, beloved editor of ***CBG***, has the same problem with this word. So I can't actually use the word in this column. Whenever I attempt to use it in this column, she changes it to "crud," which doesn't convey the precise meaning I intend for the word when I use it. However, for the sake of relating this incident, I won't use the actual word here and will, instead, use the word "carp," which is, as you know, "a large variable Old World soft-finned freshwater fish of sluggish waters often raised for food." We can only hope no typographical error arises to undermine my heartfelt attempt to behave and play well with others.

In the course of my script, Johnny Blaze refers to something as "five-and-ten story *carp.*" While I don't deny the word also has a scatological definition, the context here was clearly that of an cheap, poorly-made item, junk, if you will. It was *the* common use of the word in the middle-class neighborhood of my youth and said usage is still so common it routinely appears on television shows *sans* parental warnings. When referring to animal or human waste, we used another word entirely, one that starts and ends with "p." We were fairly conservative hooligans.

Marvel received one angry letter complaining about my use of the word "carp" in my script, and my editors, well, let's just say I think they overreacted. Ever the soul of conciliation, I ran the irate reader's comments in the *Ghost Rider* letters column with the explanation for my use of the word and an apology for inadvertently offending him. Which, as I recall, gave me the excuse to use the word "carp" once again.

Case the fourth: When editor of several Marvel horror magazines, I had a distaste for the "injury to eye motif" in stories I published. I also had a 20-page-plus *Tales of the Zombie* job in my inventory — with an "injury to the eye" scene.

In the original version, we see an old woman looking through the eyes of a painting from behind the wall on which the painting is hung. Someone sticks swords into the eyes of the painting, and we then see them go into the woman's eyes. Then we cut to a scene of the two swords sticking out of the painting.

I asked Marie Severin, one of the nicest people in comics, to redraw the panel showing the woman getting the swords in the eyes. I wanted her to show a close-up of the woman just *before* the swords actually come into the panel. I figured the woman's reaction and the following scene of the swords hanging from the painting would adequately convey what had happened.

Marie did as I asked but then lightly pasted a second panel over her correction. The second panel showed the woman's eyeballs removed from their sockets and neatly skewered on the swords. I laughed so hard the rest of the Marvel bullpen was wondering what the halibut was so funny.

Which brings us to the prank played on the CMAA by my pals Jim Starlin and Al Milgrom. Starlin was writing and drawing "Warlock" in *Strange Tales* at the time. This would have been in #178-181 of the title. I was asked — by Al, I believe, if I could get him a stat of the Comics Code seal. I had a hunch he was up to no good, so, of course, I got him one. Clearly, my frequent use of the word "carp" had corrupted me completely.

The guys did a cut-and-paste job on the stat and pasted it on the next cover Jim did for *Strange Tales*. I won't say that no one in the office spotted the alteration, but, if they did, they kept quiet about it. When that issue of *Strange Tales* appeared on the stands, it was the first comic book in the history of the industry to be "Approved by the *Cosmic* Code Authority."

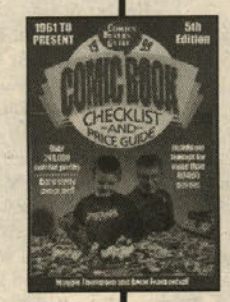
Next week, I'll continue this discussion by telling you about the one time the Comics Code folks tried to reject a story on which I had worked — it was during my brief time as a DC editor — as well as my Code-related experiences as a comics retailer. Then, for the big finish, I'll explain why I think both the Code and the CMAA have long since outlived whatever usefulness they might have had at their inceptions.

In the meantime, your assignment is to track down a copy of Amy Kiste Nyberg's *Seal of Approval: The History of the Comics Code* (University Press of Mississippi, $18), an excellent chronicle of comic-book censorship, and read it. The author doesn't have quite my flair for colorful and fish-inspired language, but she does a superb job covering the subject.

I'll be back next week to thrill you anew.

Comments on and review items for this column can be sent to: Tony's Tips, P.O. Box 1502, Medina, OH 44258. You can also e-mail Tony at: tonyisa@ohio.net

Things you can do online...



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SUN SEP 5

Born on this date:
Arvell Jones
Lee Marrs
Cathy Lee Guisewite (1950)
Bob Chapman (1952)
Stephen D. Sullivan (1959) **40** years ago

MON SEP 6

Labor Day

Born on this date:
Sergio Aragonés (1937)
Roger May (1947)
Mike Zeck (1949) **50** years ago
Brian Clopper (1967)

TUES SEP 7

Born on this date:
Warren Sattler (1934) **65** years ago
Barry Lawrence Blair (1954) **45** years ago

WED SEP 8

CBG* #1349** ships — Alan Moore is the second subject in ***CBG's The Write Stuff series of features. His comics contributions range from fresh takes on old heroes to wild creations from his own imagination. Find out more about Moore in this issue!

Born on this date:
Archie Goodwin (1937)
David Schwartz (1954) **45** years ago
Sam Kujava (1954) **45** years ago

THURS SEP 9

Born on this date:
Frank Robbins (1917)
Leslie Zahler (1953)
Dan Vado (1959) **40** years ago
Kevin Maguire (1960)
Jerry Prosser (1963)
Vince Stone (1964) **35** years ago

FRI SEP 10

Born on this date:
Roy Doty (1922)
Frank Hill (1929) **70** years ago
Jackie Estrada (1946)
Gerry Conway (1952)
Nancy A. Collins (1959) **40** years ago

SAT SEP 11

Royalfest '99 begins in St. Louis, Mo. See Calendar Notes.

Rosh Hashanah

Born on this date:
Rod Whigham (1954) **45** years ago
Jon Macy (1964) **35** years ago
Michael Wright (1967)

Publishers

To see your comics listed here, please supply the exact shipping date for each title *as soon as possible*, preferably at least one month ahead of time. Send the information to: Maggie Thompson, CBG Calendar, 700 E. State St., Iola, WI 54990. The same goes for any other announcements, additions, and corrections.

CBG Calendar Notes

Shows listed are multiple-day, non-mall-show events with the primary focus on comic books. Further information about these and other shows, as well as creator appearances, can be found each week in the *CBG* features *What, Where, and When* and *Now Appearing*.

• **Royalfest '99**, Sept. 11 and 12 in St. Louis, Mo. Guests include: Murphy Anderson, Rick Burchett, Joe Giella, Denny O'Neil, and Julie Schwartz. Info: Jim Castello at (314) 428-2699 or Kerry Parks at (660) 479-5498.

Continuing This Week

• **Cartoon Art Museum**, 814 Mission St., San Francisco, CA. Call for updates on current exhibits: (415) CAR-TOON.

• **In Line with Al Hirschfeld**, an exhibit of caricature art by Al Hirschfeld, including theater playbills, posters, and magazine and book illustrations, on display through Oct. 3 at the New Britain Museum of American Art, 56 Lexington St., New Britain, CT. Info: (860) 229-0257.

• **International Museum of Cartoon Art**, 201 Plaza Real, Boca Raton, FL 33432. Call for updates on current exhibits: (561) 391-2200. **Current exhibit: Tarzan from Foster to Disney**, through Sept. 19. Tarzan art by Hogarth, Foster, Manning, and other talents who have worked on *Tarzan* strips and comic books.

• **60 Years of The Batman**, an exhibit of original art by Jim Aparo, Norm Breyfogle, Mark Buckingham, Mike Collins, Bryan Talbot, and others will run through the summer at American Dream Gallery, 72 Walcot St., Bath, United Kingdom. Info: 01225 424881.

New comics scheduled to ship this week

The following information is taken from publisher and distributor solicitations and updates and is as accurate as possible at press time. Check with your local retailer to find out what day new comics go on the shelves. Comics that are delayed or rescheduled will be tracked in future *CBG Calendars*. **Note:** ✪ indicates a rescheduled comic book that appeared in a previous *CBG Calendar*.

Amaze Ink/Slave Labor
✪ *Action Girl Comics* #18, $2.95 (Jun)

Archie Comics Publications
Cheryl Blossom #27, $1.79
Knuckles #30, $1.79
Laugh Digest #153, $1.99

Dark Horse
Aliens vs. Predator Eternal TPB, $9.95
Heart of Empire: The Legacy of Luther Arkwright #6 (of 9), $3.50
Hellboy: Box Full of Evil #2 (of 2), $2.95
Masakazu Katsura's Shadow Lady: Eyes of a Stranger (5 of 5) #12, $2.50
Star Wars: The Bounty Hunters: Scoundrel's Wages, $2.95

DC Comics
Action Comics #759, $1.99
Azrael: Agent of the Bat #58, $2.25
Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight #123, $1.99
Day of Judgment #2 (of 5), $2.50
Desperadoes: Epidemic, $5.95
Finals #3 (of 4), $2.95
Green Lantern: Fear Itself, $14.95
Heavy Liquid #2 (of 5), $5.95
Hourman #8, $2.50
Impulse #54, $2.25
JLA: Superpower, $5.95
Legends of the DC Universe #22, $1.99
Legionnaires #77, $2.50
Nightwing #37, $1.99
100 Bullets #4, $2.50
Planetary #6, $2.50
Scooby-Doo #28, $1.99
Speed Racer #2 (of 3), $2.50
Stars and S.T.R.I.P.E. #4, $2.50
✪ *Stormwatch: A Finer World TPB*, $14.95 (Aug. 29-Sep. 4)
Superman & Savage Dragon: Metropolis, $4.95
Superman Adventures #37, $1.99
Superman in the Sixties TPB, $19.95
Tomorrow Stories #2, $2.95

Image Comics
Rising Stars #2, $2.50
Tales of the Witchblade #8, $2.95

Marvel Comics
Amazing Spider-Man #11, $1.99
Avengers: United They Stand #1, $2.99
Black Panther #12, $2.50
Generation X #57, $2.99
Iron Man #22, $1.99
Mutant X #14, $1.99
New Warriors #2 (two covers), $2.50
Spider-Girl #14, $1.99
X-Men: True Friends #3 (of 3), $2.99

October Comics
Y's Guys #2, $2.95

Oni Press
Nobody: Sacrifices TPB, $11.95

Viz Communications
Inu-Yasha: A Feudal Fairy Tale Part 3 #6 (of 7), $3.25
Pulp Vol. 3 #10, $5.95
Ranma 1/2 Vol. 14 TPB, $15.95
Silent Möbius: Into the Labyrinth #5 (of 6), $3.25

Warp Graphics
Elfquest Reader's Collectection Vol. 9B: Blood of Ten Chiefs, $12.95

Shipping notes and updates

• **Confirmed shipping:** We have received confirmation that the following titles have shipped and should be available in stores. This reflects shipping information received through Aug. 20.

Amaze Ink/Slave Labor: *Dork* #7, $2.95 (Apr)
Antarctic: *Box Office Poison* #15, $2.99 (Aug)
Fifth Force: Hawk and Animal #2, $2.50 (Jul)
Gold Digger Vol. 2 #2, $2.50 (Aug)
Warrior Nun Black & White #21, $2.50 (Jul)
World War II: 1946 #2, $2.50 (Aug)
Archie: *Archie's Double Digest* #111, $2.99 (Aug. 15-21)
Betty & Veronica #141, $1.79 (Aug. 15-21)
Jughead with Archie Digest #152, $1.99 (Aug. 15-21)
Sonic the Hedgehog #76, $1.79 (Aug. 15-21)
Arrow: *Miss Chevious: The Armageddon Project* #1 (of 4), $2.95 (Jul)
Bongo: *Simpsons Comics* #44, $2.50 (Aug)
Caliber: *Sherlock Holmes Reader* #2, $3.95 (May)
Catfish: *Sinnamon Saga* #1, $2.75 (Jun)
Chaos: *Mankind* #1, $2.95 (Aug)
Undertaker #6 (two covers), $2.95 (Aug)
Undertaker: Prophecy of the Dead TPB, $12.95 (Aug)
Claypool: *Elvira* #76, $2.50 (Aug)
Soulsearchers #37, $2.50 (Jul)
CPM: *Dark Angel* #3, $2.95 (Jul)
Geobreeders #6, $2.95 (Aug)
Lodoss War: The Lady of Pharis #5, $2.95 (Aug)
Crucial: *Rat Bastard* #6, $1.95 (Jul)
Dark Horse: *Bob Burden's Original Mysterymen* #2, $2.95 (Aug. 15-21)
Buffy the Vampire Slayer #12 (two covers), $2.95 (Aug. 15-21)
Dylan Dog #6 (of 6), $4.95 (Aug. 8-14)
Edgar Rice Burroughs' Tarzan: Carson of Venus TPB, $12.95 (Aug. 15-21)
Gunsmith Cats: Bean Bandit #8 (of 9), $2.95 (Aug. 15-21)
Martin Mystery #6 (of 6), $4.95 (Aug. 15-21)
Predator: Xenogenesis #1 (of 4), $2.95 (Aug. 15-21)
Usagi Yojimbo: Grasscutter TPB, $16.95 (Aug. 8-14)
DC: *Animaniacs Featuring Pinky and the Brain* #53, $1.99 (Aug. 15-21)
Aquaman #60, $1.99 (Aug. 8-14)
Batman #570, $1.99 (Aug. 15-21)
Batman 80-Page Giant #2, $4.95 (Aug. 15-21)
Books of Faerie: Molly's Story #2 (of 4), $2.50 (Aug. 15-21)
Cartoon Network Starring #2, $1.99 (Aug. 15-21)
Dreaming #41, $2.50 (Aug. 15-21)
Flash & Green Lantern: The Brave & the Bold #1 (of 6), $2.50 (Aug. 15-21)
Gen 13 #44, $2.50 (Aug. 15-21)
Giantkiller #3 (of 6), $2.50 (Aug. 15-21)
Green Lantern Annual #8, $2.95 (Aug. 15-21)
JSA #3, $2.50 (Aug. 15-21)
L.A.W. (Living Assault Weapons) #2 (of 6), $2.50 (Aug. 15-21)
Legion of Super-Heroes: The Beginning of Tomorrow TPB, $17.95 (Aug. 15-21)
Promethea #3, $2.95 (Aug. 15-21)
Sci-Tech #2 (of 4), $2.50 (Aug. 15-21)
Superboy #67, $1.99 (Aug. 15-21)
Superman: The Man of Steel #93, $1.99 (Aug. 15-21)
Titans #8, $2.50 (Aug. 15-21)
Wildcats Trilogy Collection, $7.95 (Aug. 15-21)
Drawn & Quarterly: *Berlin* #6, $2.95 (May)
Fantagraphics: *Acme Novelty Library* #13, $10.95 (Jul)
Nimrod #3, $2.95 (Jul)
Original Bondage Fairies #10, $3.50 (Aug)
Submissive Suzanne #7, $3.95 (Jun)
Silky Whip Extreme #4, $3.50 (Aug)
Zero Zero #26, $4.95 (Jun)
Fireman: *Gear TPB*, $14.95 (Aug)
Heavy Metal: *Fatal Rendevous HC*, $14.95 (Aug)
Heavy Metal Summer 1999 F.A.K.K.² Movie Special HC, $19.95 (Aug. 15-21)
Image: *Crow* #7, $2.50 (Aug)
Darkness #25 (two covers), $3.50 (Jun)
Intrigue #1, $2.50 (Aug)
Jade Warriors #1, $2.50 (Aug)
Journeyman #1, $2.95 (Aug)
Kabuki Agents: Scarab #1 (two covers), $2.95 (Aug)
Lady Pendragon: Dragon Blade #4, $2.50 (Jul)
Little Red Hot: The Foolish Collection TPB, $12.95 (Aug)
Nash #1, $2.50 (Aug. 8-14)
Savage Dragon #65, $2.50 (Aug)
Savage Dragon: Revenge, $13.95 (Jun)
Spawn: The Dark Ages #6, $2.50 (Aug)
Weasel Guy: Road Trip #1, $2.95 (Aug)
Kenzer & Co.: *Avelon* #8, $2.95 (Aug)
Knights of the Dinner Table #34, $2.95 (Aug)
Knights of the Dinner Table: Bundle of Trouble Vol. 3, $9.95 (Aug)
Marvel: *Black Panther* #10, $2.50 (Jun 6-12)
Captain America #22, $1.99 (Aug. 15-21)
Deathlok #2 (two covers), $1.99 (Jul. 18-24)
Fantastic Five #1, $1.99 (Aug. 15-21)
Galactus the Devourer #2 (of 6), $2.50 (Aug. 15-21)
Hulk #7, $1.99 (Aug. 15-21)
Hulk 1999, $3.50 (Aug. 1-7)
Peter Parker: Spider-Man #10, $1.99 (Aug. 15-21)
Thunderbolts #31, $1.99 (Aug. 15-21)
X-Man #56, $1.99 (Aug. 15-21)
X-Men #93, $1.99 (Aug. 15-21)
NBM: *Lady and the Vampire*, $10.95 (Jul)
Radio: *Morning Glory* #5, $2.95 (May)
Realm: *Battlestar Galactica 1999 Tourbook Convention Ed.*, $6.99 (signed ed., $29.95) (Aug)
Soft Cell: *Inju L.A.* #1, $2.95 (Aug)
Terra Major: *Roland: Days of Wrath* #2 (of 4), $2.95 (Aug)
Three Finger Prints: *Geeksville* #1, $2.75 (Aug)
Viz: *Animerica Extra Vol. 2* #9, $4.95 (Aug)
Black & White #1 (of 5), $3.25 (Aug)
Dragonball Z Part 2 #9 (of 14), $2.95 (Aug)
Fushigi Yugi Vol. 1 Priestess TPB, $15.95 (Aug)
Maison Ikkoku Part 9 #5 (of 10), $3.25 (Aug)
Pokémon Vol. 1: The Electric Tale of Pikachu TPB, $12.95 (Aug)
White Lightning: *Cream & Sugar* #2, $2.95 (Jul)

New comics scheduled to ship in September

These are comics scheduled to ship during the month of September that, to the best of our knowledge, have not yet had specific release dates announced. Be aware that comics can take two or three days to reach retailers once they are shipped, so comics that are shipped at the end of the month may not appear in your local store until early the following month.

A Fine Line
Stinz: Playthings, $6

A Silent Comics
Arsenic Lullaby (Sep 99), $2.50

Aardvark-Vanaheim
Cerebus #246, $2.25

ABC Studios
Bad Apples: High Expectations #2 (of 3), $3 (spec. ed., $8)
China & Jazz: Superstars #1 (of 3), $3 (nude ed., $8)
Double Impact/Razor Preview, $3 (nude ed., $8)
Jazz the Series #2, $3 (nude ed., $8)
Poison Red #2, $3 (two nude eds., $8)

Abismo
Pablo's Inferno #1 (of 5), $2.95

Abstract Studios
Strangers in Paradise Vol. 3 #27, $2.75

AC Comics
Best of the West #7, $5.95
Golden Age Sheena: Queen of the Jungle TPB, $11.95

Acclaim Comics
Quantum & Woody #32, $2.50
Shadowman Vol. 3 #3, $2.50

ACG
ACG Platinum Romance Special #1, $2.95
Cop Called Tracy #9 (two covers), $2.95
Dick Tracy: Crimebuster #8, $2.95
Great Detective Starring Sherlock Holmes #1, $2.95
Halloween Horror #1, $2.95
Johnny Comet #3, $2.95
Lonely War of Willie Schultz #3, $2.95
Paper Dolls from the Comics, $6.95 (spec. ed., $14.95)

Acorn Comics
Orville #3, $2.95

Action Planet
Hot Twisted Love, $2.95

Action Press
Iron Wings #3, $2.50

Adept Books
Sweet #5, $2.95

Ait/Planetlar
Astronauts in Trouble: Cool Ed's #1, $2.95

Alchemy Texts
Armageddon Patrol: The Shot, $2.95

Alternative Comics
Shellmen #1, $2.95

Amaze Ink/Slave Labor Graphics
Comic Book Heaven Vol. 2 #1, $1.95
Gloom Cookie #2, $2.95
Monsters in My Tummy, $5.95
Oddjob #3, $2.95
Smith Brown Jones Special Convention Mayhem, $5.95
Stitch #1, $2.95
Wyrd: The Reluctant Warrior #3 (of 6), $2.95

Antarctic Press
Alley Oop Quarterly #1, $2.50
Fifth Force: Hawk and Animal #3, $2.50
Gold Digger Vol. 2 #3, $2.50
Mangazine #3, $8.99
Ninja High School Version 2 #3, $2.50
Warrior Nun Areala Vol. 3 #3, $2.50
World War II: 1946 #3, $2.50

Arrow Comics Group
Spank the Monkey #4, $2.95
War of the Worlds: The Memphis Front #5 (of 5), $2.95

Arrow Manga
Miss Chevious: The Armageddon Project #2 (of 4), $2.95

Avatar Press
Cuda #0, $7.95 (spec. ed., $8.95; nude ed., $9)
Dreamwalker Autumn Leaves #1, $3
Faust: Book of M #3 (of 3), $3.95
Marshall Godling of War #1, $3
Razor: The Ravening #1, $3.50 (nude ed., $6)
Snowman TPB, $13.95
Threshold #20 (three covers), $4.95 (nude ed., $6)

Awesome Entertainment
Glory #1, $2.99
Legend of the Dreamwalk #1, $2.99
Supreme Classic Collected Ed. #1, $5.95
Supreme: The Return #5, $2.99
Warchild: Merlyn #1, $2.99

Bare Bones Studios
Garou: The Lone Wolf #2, $2

Basement Comics
Klyde #1, $2.95

Big Baby Comics
Hero on a Stick #3, $2.95

Black Bear Press
Mad Monster Party #3 (of 4), $2.95
Spirit of the Highwayman TPB, $10.95

Blue Corn Comics
Peace Party #2, $2.95

Bongo Comics
Bart Simpson's Treehouse of Horror #5, $3.50

Caliber
Acheron: Fate's Pawn #1 (of 3), $2.95
Kilroy Is Here: Pride, Prejudice, and Persecution TPB, $6.95
Kilroy: The Origin, $4.95
Magus: The Enlightened One, $4.95
Saint Germaine: Falstaff, $2.95

Cartoon Books
Stupid Stupid Rat Tails: The Adventures of Big Johnson Bone #1, $2.95

Catfish Comics
Sinnamon Saga #2, $2.75

Chaos! Comics
Armageddon #1 (of 4), $2.95
Insane Clown Posse: Raze the Desertz of Glass, $2.95
Lady Death: Judgment War Prelude, $2.95
Purgatori: Goddess Rising #4 (of 4), $2.95
Undertaker #7 (two covers), $2.95

Chemical Brain Comics
My Life with Eddie Vedder #3, $2.95

Chibi-Pop Manga
Chibi-Pop Manga Vol. 2 #2, $3.95

Claypool Comics
Elvira #77, $2.50
Soulsearchers #38, $2.50

Club 408 Graphics
Timespell #4, $2.95

Comics Conspiracy
Para Troop #0, $3.95

CPM Manga
Call Me Princess #5, $2.95
Dark Angel #5, $2.95
Geobreeders #7, $2.95
Lodoss War: The Grey Witch #11, $2.95
Lodoss War: The Lady of Pharis #6, $2.95
Martian Successor Nadesico #4, $2.95

Cross Plains Comics
Red Sonja: Death in Scarlet #1, $2.95
Red Sonja: Life and Times of a She-Devil Vol. 1, $19.95

Diva
Central City #1, $5

Drawn & Quarterly
Louis Riel #2, $2.95

Eddie Campbell Comics
Eddie Campbell's Bacchus #47, $2.95

Egmont Fleetway
Judge Dredd Megazine #58, $6.95
2000 A.D. #1159-1163, $3.25

El Capitan Books
Amy Racecar Color Special #2, $3.50

Exhibit A Press
Supernatural Law #24, $2.50

Fantagraphics Books
Bradleys #4 (of 6), $2.95
Combustion, $7.95

Games Workshop Publishing
Warhammer Monthly #21, $2.95
Warhammer Monthly #22: "Redeemer Special: The Third Epistle," $2.95

Gemstone Publishing
MD #3 (of 5), $2.50
Psychoanalysis #2 (of 4), $2.50
Vault of Horror Annual #6, $10.95

Gun Dog Comics
Gunner #7, $2.95

Hall of Heroes
Dragon's Bane #3, $2.50

Hamlyn
Durham Red: Scarlet Cantos, $20.99
Judge Dredd: Judgement Day, $27.99
Judge Dredd: Scorpion Dance, $27.99

Harris Comics
Vampirella: Rebirth #2 (of 3), $2.95

Highwater Books
Lost Valley, $3
Perfect Example TPB, $9.95

Ice Entertainment
Kin #1, $2.95

Image Comics
Adrenalynn #2, $2.50
Age of Bronze #5, $2.95
Alley Cat #3, $2.50
Aria #7, $2.50
Aria: Blanc & Noir #2, $2.50
Big Bang Comics #27, $3.95
Blue #2, $2.50
Crow #8, $2.50
Cy-Gor #3, $2.50
Deity: Revelations #3, $2.95
Desperate Times TPB, $12.95
Duncan's Kingdom #1, $2.95
Exposure #2, $2.50
Forever Amber #3 (of 4), $2.25
Intrigue #2, $2.50 (two covers)
Journeyman #2 (of 3), $2.95
Kabuki Agents: Scarab #2, $2.95
Kabuki Classics #9, $3.25
Kiss: Psycho Circus #24, $2.25
Lady Pendragon: Dragon Blade #6, $2.50
Mage: The Hero Defined #15, $5.95
More than Mortal Collected Ed. Vol. #1, $6.95
More than Mortal: Otherworlds #3, $2.95
Nash #2, $2.50
Neon Cyber #3, $2.50
Q-Unit: Revenge #1, $2.95
Sam and Twitch #2, $2.50
Savage Dragon #67, $2.50
Solar Lord #7, $2.50
Spawn #90, $1.95
Spawn TPB IX: Urban Jungle, $9.95
Spawn: The Dark Ages #7, $2.50
Spawn: The Undead #4, $1.95
Tenth: Evil's Child #1, $2.95
Tooth and Claw #2, $2.95
Warlands #2, $2.50
Weasel Guy: Road Trip #2, $2.95
Witchfinder #1 (of 3), $2.95
Zorro: Matanzas #1, $2.95

Ironcat
Futaba-Kun Change Vol. 3 #3, $2.95
Hyper Dolls Vol. 3 #1, $2.95
New Vampire Miyu Vol. 4 #5, $2.95
Panku Ponk #2, $2.95

Kenzer & Company
Knights of the Dinner Table #35, $2.95

Lethargic Comics International
Lethargic Lad #12, $2.95

London Night Studios
Warrior Nun Areala/Razor: Dark Prophecy #1, $2.50

Lone Star Press
Force Seven #2, $2.95

Mighty Gremlin
Electric Girl #3, $2.95

Mixx Entertainment
Ice Blade Mixx Manga Vol. 3, $11.95
Magic Knight Rayearth Mixx Manga Vol. 3, $11.95
Sailor Moon #12, $2.95
Tokyo Pop Vol. 3 #2, $4.99

Mprints Publishing
Ernor #2 (of 6), $2.95

NBM
Princess and the Frog, $15.95

New Breed Comics
Tohubohu #1, $3.25

New England Comics
Tick's Big Halloween Special #1, $3.50
Tick: Heroes of the City #5, $3.50
Tick: Karma Tornado Bonanza Ed. TPB, $4.95

Nickelodeon
Rugrats Comic Adventures Vol. 1 #1, #2, $2.95

Pan Entertainment
Knewts of the Round Table #7, $2.50

Peregrine Arts & Entertainment
Books of Lore: Shape of Evil #1 (of 2), $2.95
Countess Vladimira: Blood Relations #2 (of 4), $2.95
Independent Voices #2, $2.95

Pin! & Ink
Thundergirls #3, $2.95

Q Comics
Varick: Chronicles of the Dark Prince #3, $1.95

Radio Comix
Furrlough #81, $2.95
Wildlifers Back-to-School Special #1, $4.95

Realm Press
Battlestar Galactica Season 3 #4 (two covers), $2.99
Galactica: The New Millennium #1, $2.99

Sandberg Publishing
Jupiter #2, $2.95

Scorpion Productions
Diabolik Vol. 1 #3, $5.95

Shanda Fantasy Arts
Extinctioners Vol. 2 #3, $2.95
SFA Spotlight #6, $4.95

Sicilian Dragon
Anne Rice's Tale of the Body Thief #1 (of 12), $2.95

Sirius Entertainment
Artesia Vol. 1 TPB, $19.95
Empty Zone #3, $2.95
Poe #19, $2.95
Poison Elves #49, $2.50
7th System #5 (of 6), $2.95

6 Handed Press
Faans #5, $2.95

Slab-o-Concrete
Bulletins from Serbia, $12

Sleepy House Graphics
Hanzo: Freeway Ninja #3, $3.50

Solson Entertainment
Scream #1, $5.95

Stronghold Studios
Worgard: Viking Berserkir #2, $2.95

Studio Chikara
Barbi Twins Color Special: The Roswell Incident, $3.95
Pop Parody Comics Big-Fat-Sci-Fi-Special, $2.95
Zen Intergalactic Ninja #1, $3.95

Sunset Strips
Detective: Chronicles of Max Faccioni #1 (of 12), $2.95

Terra Major
Roland: Days of Wrath #3 (of 4), $2.95

TheComic.Com
Beowulf #2 (of 3), $4.50

Thinktank Comics
Hysteria #4, $2.95

Toadstool Enterprises
Default Factor 12 #3, $2.75

Top Shelf Productions
New Hat Stories: Banks/Eubanks, $9.95

United Publications
Wildfall: People, Places & Gods, $5

Wilson Place Comics
WJHC #2, $1.95

ADULT COMICS

ABC Studios
Confessions of a Horny Maid #1, $3 (nude ed., $8)
Dangerous Curves Manga #1, $3 (nude ed., $8)

Antarctic Press
A-Bomb #3, $2.99

Avatar Press
Widow X #5, $4.95 (nude ed., $6)

CPM Manga
Urotsukidoji: Return of the Chojin #1, $2.95

Fantagraphics Books
Lord Farris: Slavemaster #8, $3.75
Monsterotica, $2.95
She Dom: The Awakening of Chiara Rosenberg, $12.95
Original Bondage Fairies #11, $3.50
Sex-Philes #9, $3.95
Silky Whip Extreme #5, $3.50

Ironcat
Love Touch #2, $2.95
Ogenki Clinic Vol. 4 #6, $2.95
Valkyr Vol. 1 #5, $2.95

Last Gasp
Sweet Submission Vol. 2, $13.95

NBM
Body Heat, $11.95

Radio Comix
Milk! #13, $2.95

Re-Visionary Press
Ginger Lynn in Torn: Official Film Adaptation, $3.50
Marilyn Chambers in Still Insatiable: Off Film Adaptation, $3.50

White Lightning Productions
Cream & Sugar #3 (of 3), $2.95

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COMIC SHOP DIRECTORY

The following is a listing of comic shops across the country, arranged by state. Be sure to mention that you saw it in CBG!

Retailers listed in bold sell Comics Buyer's Guide in their stores. For information on how you can sell Comics Buyer's Guide in your store contact your Comics Distributor or our Bulk Sales Department at 715-445-2214.

The stores bearing the PACER logo are members of the Professional Association of Comics & Entertainment Retailers.

Stores interested in becoming a PACER member and being listed in this section should call 718-622-3224.

ALABAMA

Comic Shop, The
502 Andrew Jackson Way
Huntsville, AL 35801
205-536-5186
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ARIZONA

Fan-Quest
2241 S. Ave. A#30
Yuma, AZ 85364
Comics, Role Playing Games, Collectible Card Games, Enesco Figurines, Precious Moments Tender Tails, Lou Rankin Plush

CALIFORNIA

Comics & Comix
2502 Telegraph Ave.
Berkeley, CA 94704-2918
510-845-4091
C.K. Penchant

Comics & Comix
8040 Greenback Lane
Suites B & C
Citrus Heights, CA 95610
916-969-0717
Dave Campbell

Comics & Comix
1459B Solano Mall
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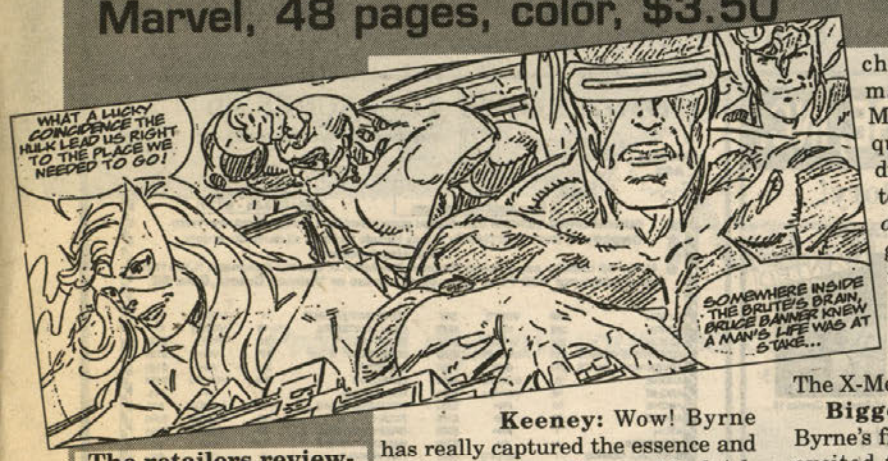
Comics in Your Future: Retailer Reviews of comics scheduled to ship in October

X-Men: The Hidden Years #1

Marvel, 48 pages, color, $3.50

John Byrne fills in the gaps between *X-Men* #66 and *Giant-Size X-Men* #1, with Cyclops, Iceman, Angel, The Beast, and Marvel Girl on a mission in the Savage Land.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The retailers reviewing October-shipping products are:

S.A. Bennett, Dark Star Books & Comics, Yellow Springs, Ohio
Cliff Biggers, Dr. No's Comics, Atlanta, Ga.
Diane Inwood, Fan-Quest, Yuma, Ariz.
Mike Keeney, Comic Corner, Huntsville, Ala.
Tom Lawton, Newbury Comics, Boston, Mass.
Phil Mateer, All about Books and Comics, Phoenix, Ariz.

Keeney: Wow! Byrne has really captured the essence and style of the Roy Thomas/Neal Adams era *X-Men*. This is one huge fight after another, with the character interplay personal but fast and simple. No overblown angst. This issue even captures the good old Stan Lee campy, over-the-top captions. This is easily my favorite Byrne project since *OMAC*. Grade: **A**.

Bennett: If you want to date yourself, let out that you remember when *X-Men* was canceled and the characters sporadically made guest shots in the Marvel universe — frequently presenting contradictory views of the characters. Byrne's work on *Spider-Man: Chapter One* was good prep work for this series, though it promises more "untold tales" than downright revisionism. And, hey, it's Byrne on The X-Men! Grade: **B**.

Biggers: I was excited with Byrne's first run on *X-Men*, and I'm excited to see him return to the team. *The Hidden Years* affords Byrne the opportunity to make use of those many concepts that didn't get developed in his first run on the title, as well as the ideas that have arisen in the years since he left it. It's hard to get back the rush of nostalgia at seeing Byrne back on the team he and Chris Claremont catapulted to superstar status — but *sans* nostalgia, this is still a solid, straight-ahead X-Men comic book. (Boy, if only they all could be.) Fans who can't make heads or tails of current *X-Men* continuity can find plenty to enjoy here. My only complaint: I could have gone for a long, long time without another Savage Land story. Grade: **A-**.

Inwood: This looks good for those who like the more traditional X-Men characters. Story looks good. If you are an X-Men fan, then pick this one up. Grade: **B**.

Mateer: Byrne's stock has fallen lately (10 years ago, the news that he was writing and drawing an X-Men series would have been huge, but the current reaction has been mostly a series of shrugs), and the promo copy for this series goes out of its way to say that it isn't *Spider-Man: Chapter One*. Thankfully, it isn't — rather than just a sterile retelling and updating of old stories, it's new adventures with the original cast, set in the years just before *Giant-Size X-Men* #1. There are some built-in problems with dramatic tension with this sort of thing, of course — we know all the main characters survived, and any *new* characters introduced are going to have a big target painted on their backs — but this first issue *is* smart, eye-pleasing fun, and it fits seamlessly into continuity, too. In an alternate universe, this would have been *X-Men* #67 — and it would have deserved to be. Grade: **B+**.

Lawton: Whoa, if you're not an X-Pert, you might have a little difficulty wading through all the characters and history thrown at you in the opening pages of this issue. But even an X-neophyte like myself can appreciate the capsule history of the team as presented by Byrne. Furthermore, his writing is exceptionally human, which is something of a lost art in hero titles. Characters speak; they don't proclaim. Really refreshing and something that might make an X-fan out of me yet. Grade: **B+**.

Retailers' grade: B+

(More reviews on Page 50)

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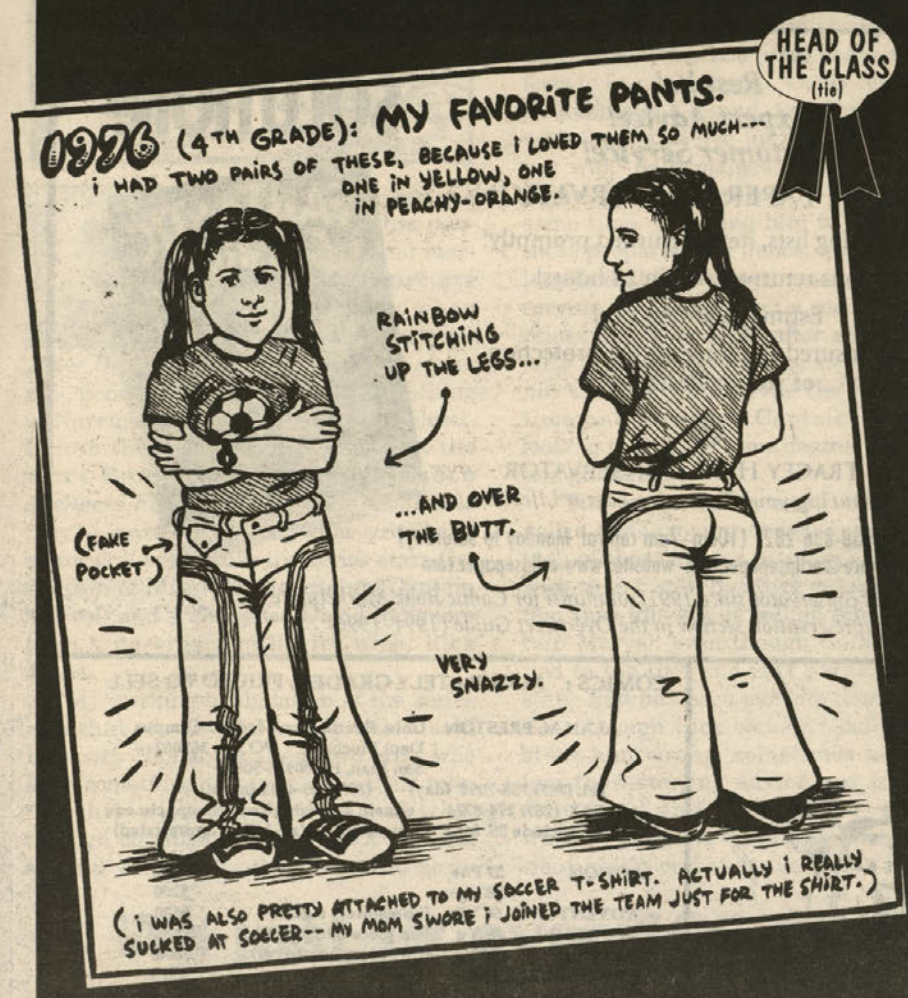
Monkey Food — The Complete "I Was Seven in '75" Collection

Fantagraphics, 144 pages, b/w, $12.95

Ellen Forney's semi-autobiographical cartoons are collected in this 5 1/2" x 5 1/2" book. Forney's adventures include a visit to a nudist camp, her babysitter stealing her parent's marijuana stash, and reading Judy Blume's *Forever*.


HEAD OF THE CLASS (tie)
1976 (4TH GRADE): MY FAVORITE PANTS.
I HAD TWO PAIRS OF THESE, BECAUSE I LOVED THEM SO MUCH--- ONE IN YELLOW, ONE IN PEACHY-ORANGE.
RAINBOW STITCHING UP THE LEGS...
...AND OVER THE BUTT.
(FAKE POCKET)
VERY SNAZZY.
(I WAS ALSO PRETTY ATTACHED TO MY SOCCER T-SHIRT. ACTUALLY I REALLY SUCKED AT SOCCER-- MY MOM SWORE I JOINED THE TEAM JUST FOR THE SHIRT.)

Inwood: I can remember doing a lot of the stuff in the book. For instance, how to comb your hair into feathers. Seems like my parents were always painting and papering the house. And who could forget those camping trips? This book made me laugh my head off. If you love *That '70s Show*, you will love this book. Grade: **A**.

Bennett: "Autobiographical" comics deservedly have the reputation for being dismal recitations of the creator's poor family life. But Forney's sweet ruminations on growing up in the '70s with her unique family are funny, well-told, and wonderfully evocative of the times. Grade: **B**.

Biggers: I was quite impressed with Forney's *I Was Seven in '75* mini-comic when I first read it last year; now we have *Monkey Food*, a collection that adds the second year of *I Was Seven in '75* pages to the collection. The new pages that I've seen are every bit as cogent, entertaining, and insightful as the original pages were; if you enjoy personal comics with a wry, sometimes poetic, insight, this is the book for you. Oh, yeah — it's pretty doggone funny, too! Grade: **A**.

Keeney: This is a warm, personal, and funny autobiography. It is refreshingly positive. The stories are told like a good conversation, full of anecdotes, familiar experiences, and just the right amount of detail to make the story clear and interesting. Some of the stories are risqué, such as camping at the nudist camp and pot parties, but *Monkey Food* is great comics reading for mature readers. Grade: **A**.

Lawton: This is a charming collection of vignettes and observations from a '70s childhood that mostly rings true, though I'll have to take Forney's word on pot-smoking parents. On the other hand, the ketchup and Velveeta version of microwave pizza reminds me just a little too much of my childhood. And my adulthood, for that matter. Chances are that, even if you were nothing in the '70s, the weirdness factor — whoa, did they really eat/wear/do that back then? — will make this illuminating reading. Grade: **B+**.

Mateer: Lots of autobiographical comics are (a) depressing, (b) static, and (c) not very well drawn, so it's refreshing to read Forney's charming, fun, and well-told stories of her childhood. It helps that her parents were '70s liberals — loving and responsible (no horrible hidden traumas for this cartoonist), but also capable of hiding marijauna in a dresser and vacationing with the kids at a nudist camp. That gives her some great stories to tell, and her cartoony, deceptively simple style is perfect for the material (it flows by so smoothly that it's only later that you realize how efficiently the compositions and figures told the tale). No matter what your age, there are enough universal childhood insights here to make you smile in recognition; Forney gets this month's vote for talent most deserving of wider recognition. Grade: **A-**.

Retailers' grade: A-

(Continues on Page 56)

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BAFFLING MYSTERIES #17 VG $28,	GHOST COMICS #5 GVG $35, #6 G $40,	THIS MAG IS HAUNTED
BEYOND #17 GVG $22, #9 G $14, #10 G+ $15, #11 G $14,	HORRORS OF UNDER WORLD	V2#13 G $22, V2#14 VG $40
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4125 COMIC SHOWS/EVENTS

COMIC AND Card Convention September 4-5th, Ventura, CA. Frank Gorshin (The Riddler) to sign autographs. For more info: 805-653-6790. George@planetten.com http://www.planetten.com

4128 DARK HORSE FOR SALE/ WANTED

NEED SAN Diego Con 1999 Program Book, Steranko Dark Horse preview and other Steranko items. Ed Rhodes Jr., 4126-38 Ave., Red Deer Alta, Canada T4N 2T9.

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4130 DC, FOR SALE

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DC WAR Our Army at War #90 thru 150, VG to Fine, individual or lot. Carlos Sanchez, 2127 Genevieve, San Bernardino, CA 92405-4003.

TARZAN #207-229, $150. Tarzan Family #60-66, $25 (VF+/NM). Korak #46 (NM), $8. Mike 978-937-0990 or mandmcassidy@mediaone.net

4130 DC, FOR SALE

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KUBERT'S KORAK #46 (1st DC issue) Kaluta art, beautiful VF/VF+, $5; #48 Fn, $1.50; #49 VF Origin, $2.50. #50 NM, $3.25. Thorne, Kaluta! 804-360-3483. bob.shippee@capitalone.com

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SWAMP THING (1st series) 7VG $8. 8NM $12. 9VF $8. 10VF $8. Jason Scroggs, 345 Walnut Cir, Bolingbrook, IL 60440. or E-mail: jasance@aol.com

SUPERGIRL (CURRENT) #1, $10. #2 $6. #3-10 $4 each. Annual #1 $3. All eleven $40. John Pierce, 328 Powhatan, Columbus, OH 43204-1965 or jgpierce65@hotmail.com

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BATMAN #102 VG, $47. #107 VG/F, $52. #125 VG, $32. #134, 137 VG/F, $30ea. Postage $2.75. John Hollop, 137 Lancaster, Albany, NY 12210. holub30@aol.com

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4131 DC, WANTED

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4140 DELL/GOLD KEY/WHITMAN FOR SALE

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DALE EVANS #14 $210. #16 $210. Annie Oakley #4 $70. #15 $60. #10 $70. PP. 419-625-4929. John Bragg, 626 Pierce St., Sandusky, OH 44870.

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THIRTEEN GOING On 18 wanted, #2, 10, 22, 27-28, Good. Lou Florio, 157 E. Church St., Bergenfield, NJ 07621-1831. Also need cheap GK, Dell Giants.

LINUS THE Lionhearted, Andy Griffith Topper 4-color 859, Beatles Life Story (Dell Giant). Karl Wilcox, 628 Morningside Dr., Chester, SC 29706.

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UNCLE SCROOGE items wanted; comics, cards, animation cells, phone cards, Barks lithographs, autographs, also Junior Woodchuck comics. Bob Hughes, 7 Copeland Rd., Framingham, MA 01701.

4160 EC, FOR SALE

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4161 EC, WANTED

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EC HARDBACK sets needed, Two Fisted Tales, Romance, Crime, Weird Science, Weird Fantasy, lesser condition, inexpensive preferred. Kevin Salvio, 427 Weaver St., Greensburg, PA 15601.

4180 FOREIGN, FOR SALE

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4191 HARVEY, WANTED

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WILLIE PENGUIN comics wanted (not "Chilly Willy"). All issues, any condition. Also KOOL penguin items. Jim Lowe, 403 E Georgia St, Tallahassee, FL 32301. jimlowe2@aol.com

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25 ASSORTED Conan, $10. 25 assorted Punisher, $10. 25 assorted Ghost Rider, $10. 25 assorted Daredevil, $10. Todd Franks, 5284 SR 50, Webster, FL 33597.

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CAPTAIN AMERICA 55 VG/FN, $300; 57 G/VG, $175; Green Lantern 21 Fair, $50; 31 G, $85. Nelson Corey, RR#1 Box 1474, Waymart, PA 18472-9757. 570-785-3212.

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BANNER COMICS #3, 4, 5. Capt. Atom #6; Capt. Flash #4; Capt. Battle, Jr #1, 2. Tom Garcia, 3830 Neptune Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11224.

CAPT. MARVEL Storybook #1. Dexter Theater Top Notch Comics, G.I. Comics # Green Mask Vol. 2 #6. Tom Garcia, 3830 Neptune Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11224.

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NEW YORK City Comic Book Museum is looking for old comics. For info: acbmuseum@aol.com

WANTED: MARVEL'S My Love and Mad About Millie, 3 VG or +. Richie Rich #1-50, G+. Mad Magazine 23-36, G+. Ken kennottjr@aol.com

KENT BLAKE- Secret Service #2-14 wanted in VF. Border Patrol #2&3 wanted, any grade. Paying 100% current guide. Hudson, 5848 County Rd. 283, Kaufman, TX 75142. 972-932-4012.

SCOOBY DOO Comic books wanted. All publishers. Please send list to: Craig Donnellan, 10 Beck Court, Kendall Park, NJ 08824. 732-821-1476 or email: craig.donnellan@mail.sprint.com.

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ROMITA SPIDER-MAN original art wanted! I will buy any page, any issue! Also seeking Romita sketches of Spider-Man, Gwen, MJ, villains. Contact: Aaron 919-954-7111.

JEFF SCOTT Campbell art for sale from Gen 13 and Danyes Girl. Contact: Graphic Collectibles at 914-246-0952 or graphcoll@codexx.com for lists.

GUERNSEY IN 1989 auctioned off 360 original pieces of wacky packages artwork. I will pay $10K for the following original art from that auction: Tied, Shot Wheels, Bum Chex, Kook-Aid, Run Tony Shells, Trix cereal, Mud magazine, Hawaian Punks, Quacker Oats, Camals and Slaytex gloves. Many more wanted. Eric Roberts, 260 Atherton Ave., Atherton, CA 94027. 650-327-6570. E-mail: plastered_peanuts@yahoo.com

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DOOM PATROL art by original Silver Age artist Burno Premiani. Also Metamorpho (any) Silver Age stuff. Apt 2204, Tim Isaacson, 400 E. Ohio, Chicago, IL 60611.

TOTH, WOOD, Williamson, Severin, Ingels, EC, VG, Warren, Corben, Krenkel, Mike Hoffman, Mark Schultz, etc. Original art wanted by private collector. jfkelly@myhost.com 732-946-0851.

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4151 Disney, Wanted
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4161 EC, Wanted
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4191 Harvey, Wanted
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4204 Image, Wanted/For Sale
4207 Malibu, Wanted/For Sale
4210 Marvel/Timely, For Sale
4211 Marvel/Timely, Wanted
4220 Science Fiction/Horror, For Sale
4221 Science Fiction/Horror Wanted
4240 Underground, For Sale
4241 Underground, Wanted
4250 Independents, For Sale
4251 Independents, Wanted
4255 Valiant/Voyager, Wanted/For Sale
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4300 Golden Age, For Sale
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GENESIS AUGUST 1973 w/Roger Moore Interview, Time 1973 w/Live and Let Die coverage I need. Delmo Walters, 939 Woodycrest Avenue #416, Bronx, NY 10452.

SUPERMAN: THE Movie issue of Electric Company Magazine, also Pizazz Superman: The Movie issue I need. Delmo Walters, 939 Woodycrest Avenue #416, Bronx, NY 10452.

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LOOKING FOR Starcrash on VHS. Will pay reasonable price. Please reply. Don Anderson Jr., 569 Paradise Blvd., Hayward, CA 94541. 510-278-2886.

4610 PORTFOLIOS/POSTERS FOR SALE

1988 US Summer Olympic Team poster 36 x 24, $10. Mitch 281-444-6293.

4611 PORTFOLIOS/POSTERS WANTED

X-MEN Chef Boyardee poster by Steranko wanted. Ed Rhodes, Jr, 4126-38 Ave, Red Deer, Alberta T4N 2T9 Canada.

4630 TRADING CARDS FOR SALE

FACTORY AUTOGRAPHED cards STOS-I-III STD59, Voyager, B5 IV and X-Files in stock. Send SASE for list. 254-634-4902. David Curtis, 1806 Sycamore, Killeen, TX 76543.

1960'S WRAPPERS: Laugh-In, Comic Book Folders, Weird-Ohs, Silly Stickers, Back-Slapper stickers, Make Your Own Name Stickers, Fink buttons. 1973-75 wrappers: Wacky Packages (call). Marc 516-829-8376.

STAR TREK Movie sets by Skybox. Six sets, six binders, and slipcase. Mint, $300. Don Faruolo, 15 Fairmount Terr., West Orange, NJ 07052. 973-325-3169.

TRADING CARD boxes. Crow $10. Rowena $10. Star Trek DS9 $15. Add $3 for US postage. Send to: Steve Tafuni, POB 43, Valrico, FL 33595.

YOUNG JEDI, rares, uncommons, etc., most available, $1 plus SASE gets you knowledge. Trades welcome. Sailor Moon wanted. Scott Cooper, Box 330, Caddo, OK 74729.

4631 TRADING CARDS WANTED

WACKY PACKAGES wanted. Will buy all original art work and uncut sheets, will also pay a finders fee for any information that results in a sale. Eric Roberts, 260 Atherton Ave., Atherton, CA 94027. 650-327-6570 or 650-326-8708.

IF YOU don't want to trade your promo cards, then how about just sending them to me! Thanks! Tom Vanko, 1527 Somerset, Munster, IN 46321-4387.

4660 MISCELLANEOUS, FOR SALE

ELVIS PRESLEY "Love Me Tender" 2"x3" enameled metal/ glass mirror. Original Mint condition, dated 1956, $12 postpaid. John Travalini, 217 New Rd., Wilmington, DE 19805.

ROCK LIVES! New CD single by Thunder Road, 3 tracks, original song and classic tunes! $10 postpaid. Pat Horgan, Box 158, Pleasant Valley, NY 12569.

JULIE STRAIN Marilyn 2000, Bette Page 2000, Singles of Hotshots, Lady Death, Mega Clear, Playboy puzzles AC&Q1. Louis Bosse, 1120 Aurora, Muskegon, MI 49442-5932.

LINDA MEDLEY in Dignifying Science! New from G.T. Labs in September's Preview. Visit http://www.gt-labs.com for more information on our Eisner nominated and Xeric winning books.

4660 MISCELLANEOUS, FOR SALE

SPORTS CARDS & memorabilia collectors: Buy and sell with the biggest and best collectors in the world. Place your classified ad in Sports Collectors Digest. 40,000 weekly readers. The hobby's oldest, most respected magazine. We are the "bible" of the industry. Bonus: Your classified ad also goes up on the Internet at no additional charge! Call today: 800-942-0673.

MOVIE SCRIPTS $18, TV Scripts $15; over 14,000 titles to choose from! Free shipping inside USA. Visit our web site at: http://www.MadMorgan.com to view catalog or contact: Mad Morgan Enterprises, PO Box 6698, Burbank, CA 91510. 818-848-1445; FAX: 818-840-1252.

SUNDAY STRIPS, 1940s thru 1980s. Batman, Tarzan, Bruce Gentry, Tom Corbett. Send wants. $1 catalog refundable. Bill Coble, 331 N. Roosevelt, Shawnee, OK 74801.

PENELOPE PITSTOP Puffy sticker, 1979 (say that five times fast) $1 each, I pay postage. Shira, 1830 N. 12th St., Phoenix, AZ 85006. I love you, Megan.

AUTOGRAPHED PHOTOS of celebrities- TV, Hollywood, singing stars, sports, more! 100+ available, low as $6 each, postpaid. John Travalini, 217 New Rd., Wilmington, DE 19805.

STAR WARS Mego figurines from SW and ESB in collector case. Rather sell as set. Write: Howard Michaels, Jr., 706 North Cottage, Mercer, PA 16137-5310.

VIDEO HORROR! B-Movie classics! Reptilicus! Them! 13 Ghosts! Circus of Horrors! Bat! Many others! All pre-recorded! $10 each! Send SASE, B-Horror, 5706 Broadway-6, Pearland, TX 77581.

SUPERMAN! 1998 Peace on Earth book "Dump" promo by Alex Ross! $25. Wonder Woman 1995 book "Dump" by Byrne $35. Call evenings. Rudy 281-997-7506.

DAFFY DUCK mail box refrigerator magnet with dummy coil of 3 stamps, $10. Walter Wyzujak, 1508 Christina St., Rockford, IL 61104-4709.

4661 MISCELLANEOUS, WANTED

WRESTLING FLYERS, advertisements, photocopies okay, can anyone make these just for fun, swap. Write: Charles Kline, PO Box 791, Cleveland, MS 38732-0791.

NEED SAN Diego Con 1999 Program Book, Steranko Dark Horse preview and other Steranko items. Ed Rhodes Jr., 4126-38 Ave., Red Deer Alta., Canada T4N 2T9.

WANTED: BEN Cooper Halloween costumes in boxes. Marvel and DC 7-11 cups. Hardback Overstreet Guides, any year. Hal Reed, 320 Parkshore Dr., Columbia, SC 29223.

WEIRD OHS model kits from Testors, send list to: Denis Schwendemann, 108 ROY St., B-23, Seattle, WA 98109.

SERIES FINALE of DS9 on VHS. Thankx! Tony Midyett, 6832 Schroeder Rd., Apt 27, Madison, WI 53711.

"EVERY DAYS A Holly Day" Pinback buttons, 2-1/4 inches, Sept 1978, need Thursday, Friday, Sunday. Ed Baldwin, 1029 Fairfax St., Radford, VA 24141. 540-639-3537.

CIGARETTE COUPONS wanted. Everything except Phillip Morris products. Paying 7% face. Unexpired only. For prompt payment, send to: John Travalini, 217 New Road, Wilmington, DE 19805.

ALEX ROSS Teen Titan's collectors plate from Warner Bros. stores. E-mail Jeff at bookieparl@aol.com

FRIENDSHIP BOOKS or penpal newsletters that have addresses of comic fans, wrestling fans, truck drivers. Information to: Charles Kline, PO Box 791, Cleveland, MS 38732-0791.

MORTAL KOMBAT Episode "Flawed Victory" I need. Willing to buy or trade, SP or EP Speed. Delmo Walters, 939 Woodycrest Avenue #416, Bronx, NY 10452.

"VERTIBIRD" TOY Helicopter set from 1970's. Flies in a circle on the floor at the end of a rod connected to a center base. 281-347-0648.

4700 NOVELTIES, TOYS, GAMES FOR SALE

MODEL KITS: Plastic, resin and vinyl. From and of comics, Sci-Fi, TV, movies, space, figures, etc. Old and new, hundreds available. Free sales catalog, we also buy and trade. JF Green Models, Dept. CBG, PO Box 55787, Riverside, CA 92517. 909-684-5300, 800-807-4759, Fax 909-684-8819, e-mail: cbg@greenmodels.com website: http://www.greenmodels.com

PLANET OF The Apes kits for sale. 1973 Addar. Dr. Zaius, $55. Gen. Aldo (sealed), $65 plus shipping. 815-886-9192 or e-mail: modelman63@aol.com

KISS DIE-CAST for Johnny Lightning funnycars set, Simmons Demon has #1 card, MIMP, $40 ppd; Ghostbusters Ecto-1A item #411-00, $10 ppd.MIMP; Star Wars POTF Sandtrooper MIMP, $10 ppd. godbear@mydeja.com

SAILOR MOON Plushes: Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, $15 each. Comic Planet, 1950 E. Greyhound Pass #18-339, Carmel, IN 46033. http://members.theglobe.com/comicplanet/

TARZAN HOGARTH puzzle for sale. Beautiful condition, worked once! $40 ppd. Richard Bailey, 19037 Shumake Drive, Raymondville, MO 65555. Phone 573-674-3962 for more info.

4700 NOVELTIES, TOYS, GAMES FOR SALE

PEP PINS, 1946, Phantom Superman, Dick Tracy, Orphan Annie, Winkles, more. Rex Munsee, Rd #3, New Bethlehem, PA 16242. 814-764-3206, nice shape, contact for prices!

1960'S MARVEL memorabilia wanted by collector. Buttons, shirts, Spider-Man toys, MMM's, posters, Romita Spider-Man art, anything! Contact: Aaron 919-954-7111.

4701 NOVELTIES, TOYS, GAMES WANTED

DC SUPER-HERO Large LP record Supercase, 1976? Plate: Wonder Woman from International Museum, McAllen TX. Figural music boxes: W.W., Joker. Tony 847-985-2485, evenings, IL.

4800 FANZINES, FOR SALE

JAPANESE ANIMATION Fanzine & club. News, reviews, translations, articles, classifieds, plus 25% discount on videos. SASE or hasshin@tiac.net Anime Hasshin, PO Box 5121, Manchester, NJ 03108.

4801 FANZINES, WANTED

THE JASSOMIAN wanted: issue #11, from October, 1973. An ERB Fanzine. Thanks, Chris Rumsey, PO Box 114, Bessie, OK 73622.

TARZINE #6 fanzine, original or photocopy. R. Dumont, 750 Whittemore, Middlebury, CT 06762. rdumont792@aol.com 203-598-3529.

CAPTAIN ATOM #6, Captain Flash #4, Man of War #2, Marvel Family #1, Roly Poly #6. Tom Garcia, 3830 Neptune Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11224.

4801 FANZINES, WANTED

YOUR STORIES on the Injustice Gang and its members wanted. Will Day, PO Box 131, Eddington, ME 04428.

4900 NEWSPAPER STRIPS, FOR SALE

PICK OUT dates. Daily and Sunday. Great Selection. 1895 to 1998. Send your wantlist and SASE to: Gordon Campbell, 1124 Brookmeade Drive, Nashville, TN 37204

NEW LIST 1930's-1970's pages, sections, $1, want lists welcome. Also older comic books, BLBs. 416-222-5808. Ken Mitchell, 710 Conacher Dr., Toronto, Ontario, M2M 3N6.

PRINCE VALIANT Sunday pages for sale, 1940s-1960s. SASE for sales/ want lists. Todd Goldberg, 215 Holmcrest Rd., Jenkintown, PA 19046. e-mail: tgoldberg@aol.com

4900 NEWSPAPER STRIPS, FOR SALE

CAPTAIN EASY 43 1967 Tabs, $15. Dick Tracy 42 1955 Y2, $63. Prince Valiant 43 1948 Full, $86. Many more. Puff, 500 Walton, Cheektowaga, NY 14225. 716-834-0996.

PROTISTA CHRONICLES: Just like nothing on earth! My brain was blazed and amazed when I discovered the secret mystery of: http://www.xulucomics.com/protista.html

4901 NEWSPAPER STRIPS, WANTED

BUYING COLLECTIONS Phone/ Fax 510-666-0732. Starland Strips, 1563 Solano PMB #155, Berkeley, CA 94707-2116.

SUPERMAN AND Batman Sundays and dailies wanted. David Barsalou, 12 Marion St., Chicopee, MA 01013. e-mail: barsaloud@sps.springfield.ma.us

The Legend of Shaloman #4

Mark 1 Comics, b/w, $2.50

Al Wiesner's Jewish super-hero series continues with Dr. Traif's attempts to prevent the observance of a Jewish holiday in the hopes that that will eliminate it. Shaloman and the Dynamic Emes Force travel back in time to thwart his plans.

Bennett: Now here's something you don't see every day; a semi-professional extreme Jewish takeoff on the original Captain Marvel. What it lacks in professional polish on script and art, it more than makes up for in heart, ingenious originality, and sheer sincerity. Here's a comic book that's about something. Grade: **B**.

Biggers: I'm fascinated by religion, and I'm confident that a great comic book could be done focusing on Jewish culture, religion, and history — but this ain't it. Oh, it very, very much wants to be — but the story is so heavy-handed that the end result is a comic book that reads like a Jewish version of a Jack Chick comic — preachy, unnecessarily instructive in a way that disrupts the narrative flow, and ultimately not very entertaining. I guess it's fun in a *Mystery Science Theater 3000*, campy way — but I can't believe that anyone will read this and come away convinced that they've gotten their money's worth in entertainment. How can the religion and history of a culture so vital to world civilization be reduced to something so unintentionally silly? Well, as the saying goes, "it's the singer, not the song." Grade: **D+**.

Inwood: Some of the dialogue reminds me of old radio scripts. The story is kind of confusing. Am I reading a time-travel story, super-heroes, or a modern-day story? I must have come in late or not read enough. Definitely pick up #1 so you won't confuse yourself. Grade: **C**.

Keeney: Unfortunately, this potentially educational and humorous comic is not interesting or funny. It is amateurish in both art and content. The history lesson wrapped into the plot is incomplete and vague. Sadly, Grade: **F**.

Mateer: This isn't really professional work — it's a high-level amateur creation. If our purpose here were to review fanzines, it would be easy to gloss over the stiffness in some of the compositions, the occasional anatomy problems, and the stop-the-story-for-big-chunks-of-exposition writing style, and instead focus on the enthusiasm, the unusual source material, and the interesting plot. As a fanzine, this would probably get at least a B+. Unfortunately, this isn't a fanzine — it's a $2.50 comic book, competing for the customer's money with Marvel, DC, Dark Horse, and everyone else. As such, it just doesn't measure up — it's mildly interesting because of the unusual-for-comics religious perspective, but otherwise it's in need of a lot of polishing before a reviewer could honestly recommend it. Grade: **D**.

Lawton: Does anyone remember Jules Feiffer's *The Great Comic Book Super Heroes*? In an early chapter, Feiffer reprints the cover of a homemade comic he created as a child. I swear, the cover of *Shaloman* is spookily reminiscent of Feiffer's book. Which is not to say that this is a case of plagiarism; few would willingly choose to copy such an amateurish drawing. Which is, I suppose, one of the reasons why I like *Shaloman*. Split evenly between historical adventure and tongue-(sandwich)-in-cheek goofiness, *Shaloman* has such a good-natured vibe that one can't help but forgive its shortcomings. So the illustrations are rough and the dialogue borders on camp. Who cares? Weisner grafts accuracy and goofball humor and makes the reader overlook the fact that he might not have planned it that way. Grade: **B**.

Retailers' grade: C-

DIGRESS
(From Page 58)

came to this sequence, I was so sure I "knew" what the CCA would and wouldn't allow that I censored myself and wrote the sequence less effectively than it could, and should, have been, only to have it corrected by the editor.

We have been told (mostly by CCA reps) that the formation of the CCA was single-handedly responsible for saving the comic-book industry. That could be debated, I suppose. But let's say, just for the sake of argument, that these reps are correct. That 40+ years ago, the CCA somehow, in some amazing way, provided the ability for publishers to keep publishing.

Forty-plus years ago, my parents were responsible for me. Took care of me, fed me, nurtured me. And I will appreciate that forever. But my mom's not still cutting my food for me. My dad isn't looking over my reading material and saying, "Nope, sorry, that's not appropriate." Sooner or later, one has to cut the ties. Move on. Say, "So long and thanks for all the fish."

The industry has moved beyond the CCA. *Elfquest* comes under attack for sequences that, if submitted to the CCA, would have sailed through. There are too many titles that don't subscribe to the CCA in the first place. And in the articles that I read condemning violent comic books after recent shootings in high schools, I don't recall seeing any journalists proclaiming, "But thank God the CCA is there, protecting us from having things get really bad."

Granted, I didn't read every article but I sure did hear quite a bit about violent comics and nothing about the exacting standards to which the CCA holds various titles. Thank heavens America's youth was protected from seeing a disguised Martian Manhunter kissing a green-skinned subterranean woman; who knows how many kids were saved because of it?

Whatever the CCA accomplished, for good or ill decades ago — it's time for the publishers to grow up and cut the old apron strings. While on the one hand censors heat up the world for comic books, at the same time the CCA is there to provide a chill. In the immortal words of Miss Adelaide: A person could develop a cold.

Peter David, writer of stuff, can be written to at To Be Continued Inc., P.O. Box 239, Bayport, NY 11705.

ODD, ISN'T IT. WHEN THE BODY RECEIVES A TRAUMATIC SHOCK... SOMETIMES THE MOST CURIOUS NON SEQUITURS JUST POP OUT.
NO, MY DEAR. IT ISN'T FUNNY.
NOT AT ALL.
UHHH...

Young Justice #4

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Iola, WI 54990-0001
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FAX#(715) 445-4087
TELEX#55-6461
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http: //www.krause.com

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AD DEADLINE	NO.	ISSUE	AD DEADLINE	NO.	ISSUE
Tues. Aug. 24, 1999	1348	Sept. 17, 1999	Tues. Sept. 14, 1999	1351	Oct. 8, 1999
Mon. Aug. 30, 1999	1349	Sept. 24, 1999	Tues. Sept. 21, 1999	1352	Oct. 15, 1999
Tues. Sept. 7, 1999	1350	Oct. 1, 1999	Tues. Sept. 28, 1999	1353	Oct. 22, 1999

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C. Half Page Vertical (4-⅞" x 11") or	$303	$297	$291	$279	$255
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Our "Classified" ads are heavily read. Base rates are 40¢ per word with discounts for multiple issues. Please print and punctuate - we are not responsible for error due to long-hand and illegible copy. For more information see classified ad form in the classified section. Credit card customers can place word ads TOLL FREE - Call 1-800-942-0673. (This is for classified word ads only.)

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Leads fans to your cash register! List your store name, address, phone number and 15 words of description. Sold in 26 and 52 week increments. It's targeted more to the comics buff than the yellow pages - and it's more cost effective. If you sell COMICS BUYER'S GUIDE in your store, we will publish your listing in bold face type at no extra charge.

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SOCIAL SECURITY # _____
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☐ CO PARTNERSHIP ☐ LIMITED PARTNERSHIP
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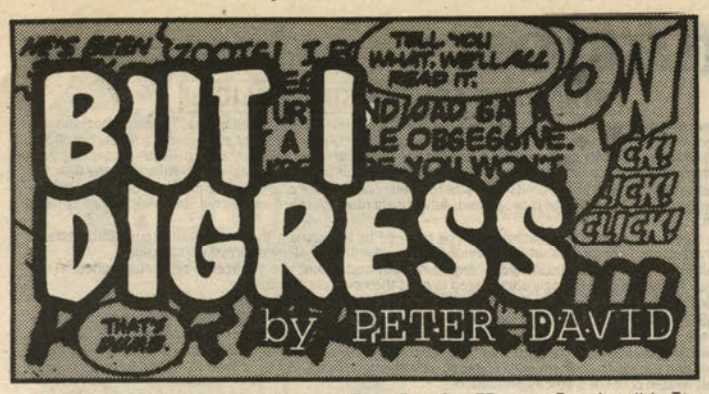

So there I was, working on the plot for *Young Justice* #4. It was intended to offer a startling opening sequence, in which the character of Arrowette is depicted having been gravely wounded, with an arrow protruding from her shoulder. For a series that had garnered a reputation for tongue-in-cheek silliness, it was to be a departure. A signal to the reader that the title should not be taken for granted. That it was capable of changing mood at a moment's notice. I didn't want anyone to get too comfortable, because nowadays, once readers figure they have a bead on you, that's when you become disposable.

What was uppermost on my mind in working out the sequence, you may ask? Was it the impact it would have on the reader? The shock value? The drastic means taken to introduce Arrowette (plus the other girls) into the series?

Nope.

It was the Comics Code Authority.

For the CCA has an immutable rule, you see. No exit wounds. Although you can show bullets, for instance, entering a body, you can't show it exiting. Nor can bladed weapons or anything else that punctures the human body be depicted as going out the side opposite to where it went in.

A writer has a variety of responsibilities, particularly when working on something that's work for hire. First and foremost, of course, he has to please himself. If what's produced via the old word processor doesn't meet with the writer's approval, it shouldn't get any further than that. No writer has any business turning in substandard work to the editor.

But another of the writer's chores is that he has to make sure that he presents the editor with something publishable. Aside from a certain baseline of quality that "publishable" entails, one also has to be aware of what will and will not fly within the strictures of the work. And I knew that the CCA had certain big no-nos. That's why Elektra's sai were capable of puncturing the back of a chair in a theater and the torso (through ribcage, musculature, *etc.*) of an adult male but somehow couldn't penetrate the front of a cotton shirt.

The most powerful way to kick off *YJ* #4 would have been to show Arrowette with the arrow going in the front of her shoulder and out the back. But I knew I couldn't. That's the power of censorious organizations, you see. They produce a sort of creative chill, so that the creator is prompted to short-circuit his own thought process for the sake of avoiding hassles. And I just didn't feel like hassling with the CCA, the organization that major publishers embrace in the continued spirit of self-censorship, as if the tattered umbrella of the CCA would offer one shred of substantial protection when the censors come.

***Justice League Task Force* #8**

The last time I'd gotten grief from the CCA was in an issue of *Justice League Task Force*. In that two-parter — something of a gender-bending send-up of the works of Edgar Rice Burroughs and H. Rider Haggard — the JLT found a subterranean race of green-skinned Amazonesque (not to be confused with Amazonian) women. For reasons too convoluted to go into, J'onn J'onzz, the Martian Manhunter, shape-shifted himself to become J'oan J'onzz, the Martian Womanhunter. The leader of the green-skinned women became enamored of J'oan. Unaware of J'oan's true "persuasion," the leader proclaimed that J'oan would become her mate. The wedding was held in part two.

And we were told they couldn't kiss. The CCA refused to allow the depiction of "two females kissing."

"Now wait a minute," we replied. "It isn't two women. One of them is J'onn J'onzz, basically in drag."

Nope. Wouldn't fly. The CCA absolutely, positively refused to let it through. "Can't show two women kissing," we were told. "But it's *not two women*!" we tried to say. It didn't penetrate, or they didn't care.

As a consequence, the sequence had to be drawn in such a way that the kiss wasn't actually shown. The art was cropped accordingly. And I was left shaking my head at the silliness of it all. There was nothing especially erotic or prurient about the sequence. It was basically a comedic story.

And it wasn't two women.

Then there was the time when, in the pages of *Incredible Hulk*, the character of Marlo had been stabbed. She lay there on the ground, covered with — black blood. "No red blood," I was told the CCA had decreed. It looked like Marlo was bleeding India ink. When fans asked me about it (and they did) I explained it was because Marlo was a comic-book character, so naturally she'd be bleeding ink.

***Incredible Hulk* #398**

So my brushes with the power of the CCA had left me aware that their hand extended to all manner of story sequences, and the last thing I felt like doing in planning *YJ* #4 was putting us squarely in the CCA's path again.

So in constructing the sequence, I indicated that the splash page should begin with a close-up shot of an arrow head, tinted with blood. In the following pages, we would then pull back to show Arrowette sagging with the arrow shaft lodged in her. But we would never actually show the other side protruding from her. Thus did I choose to go with a less effective, but "safer," means of storytelling.

Editor Eddie Berganza disagreed. I got the art pages back and flipped. There, in all its violent, bloody glory, was Miss Arrowette shown staggering back against a wall with an arrow sticking out her back.

Gone were my subtle close-ups and careful cutting around. Here was a sequence that I was positive was going to get flagged by the Comics Code. It was a flagrant violation of years' worth of prohibitions.

It was needlessly seeking out trouble, and I told Eddie so, repeatedly. Loudly. In writing.

How could he possibly think we would get away with this? It was crazy. Just pure craziness. To try and alleviate as much of the damage as possible, I slapped word balloons over the protruding arrowhead in order to hide it. Eddie moved the balloons so that the arrow was in full view. I couldn't understand it. Why was he going out of his way in order to produce a sequence that was going to get punted?

It went through.

No problems.

The issue came out, and there was Arrowette with the fully visible arrow — and red blood on it, to boot.

The scene exactly the way I would have liked to do it, except I had been so certain that the CCA would stomp on it, that I hadn't even bothered to try it.

It's not as if I'm a shrinking violet when it comes to making my views on censorship known. It's not as if I haven't been willing to fight for my creative vision. But when it

(Continues on Page 56)

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September 4

George Takei (*Star Trek*'s Mr. Sulu) at Metro Entertainment, 6 W. Anapamu, Santa Barbara, **California** 93101, beginning at 1 p.m. Call (805) 963-2168 for details.

September 11

Mike Manley (artist *Superman Adventures*, *Black Panther*) and **Tom McCraw** (*Legionnaires* and DC colorist) at Captain Blue Hen Comics, 280 E. Main St., Newark, **Delaware** from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

September 15

Mark Pacella (creator, *Tooth and Claw*) at Golden Apple, 7711 Melrose Ave., Los Angeles, **California**, from 2 to 8 p.m.

November 6

Claudia Christian (*Babylon 5*) at Metro Entertainment, 6 W. Anapamu, Santa Barbara, **California** 93101, beginning at 1 p.m. Call (805) 963-2168 for details.

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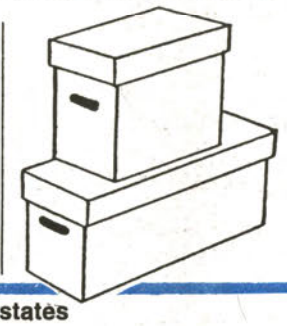

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